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ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD CO.  
OFFERS FOR SALE 2,000,000 ACRES

(1856)

ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY





THE  
Illinois Central Rail-Road Company

OFFERS FOR SALE

**OVER 2,000,000 ACRES**

SELECTED

FARMING AND WOOD LANDS,

IN TRACTS OF FORTY ACRES AND UPWARDS, TO SUIT PURCHASERS,

ON

Long Credits and at Low Rates of Interest,

SITUATED

ON EACH SIDE OF THEIR RAIL-ROAD, EXTENDING ALL THE WAY FROM THE  
EXTREME NORTH TO THE SOUTH OF THE

STATE OF ILLINOIS.

New-York :

JOHN W. AMERMAN, PRINTER,

No. 60 WILLIAM-STREET.

—  
1856.



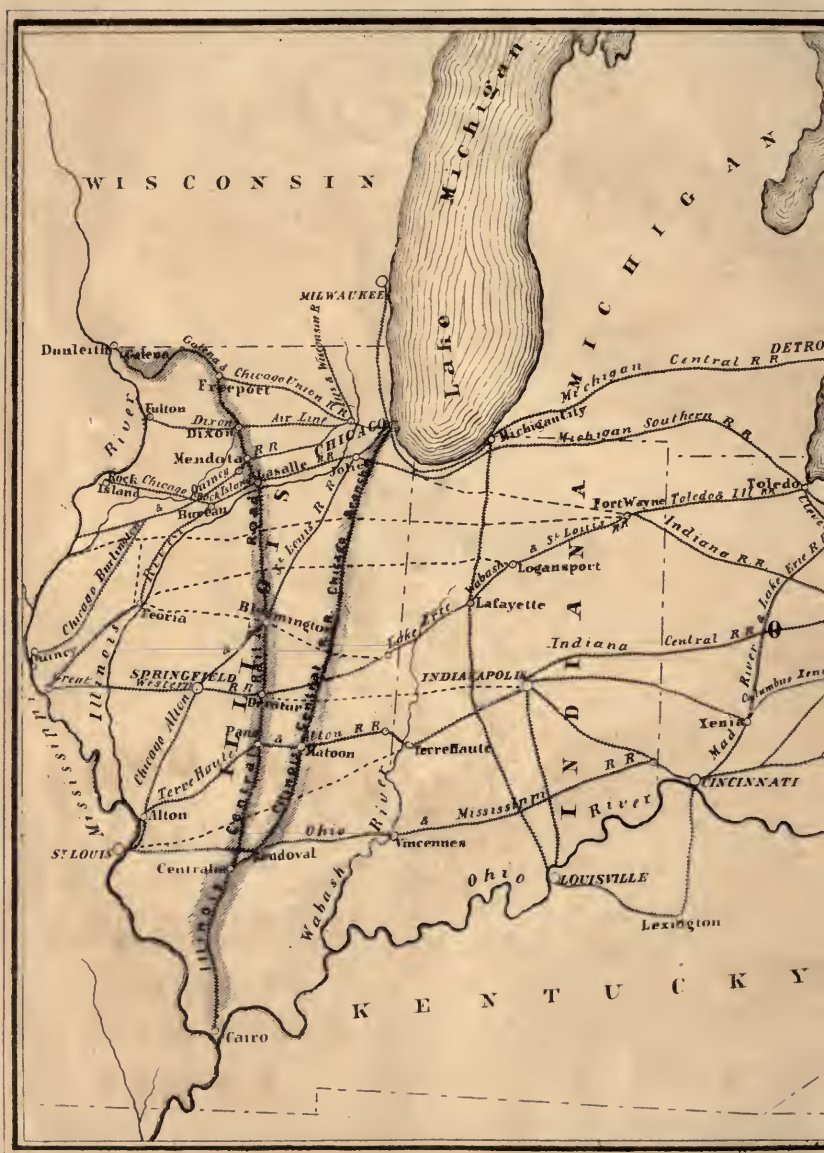




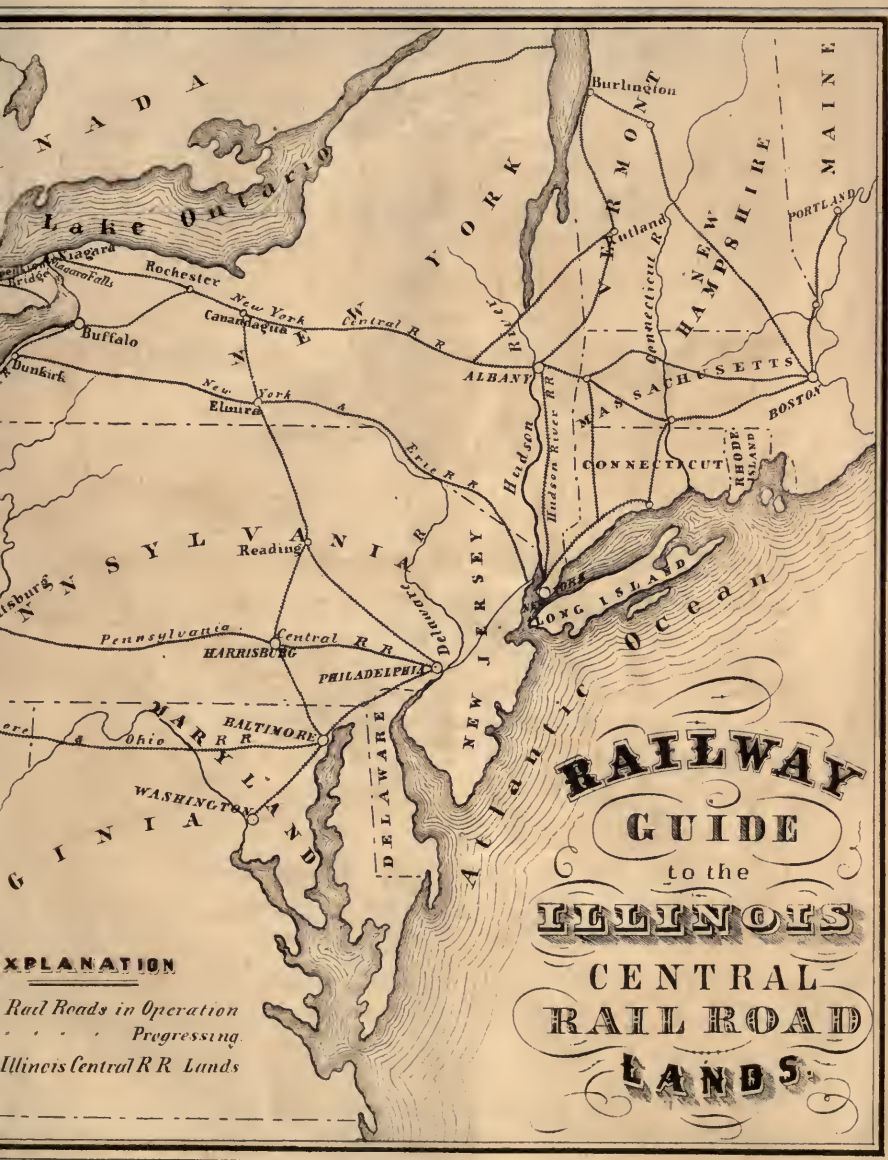




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**EXPLANATION**

Rail Roads in Operation  
Progressing  
Illinois Central R.R. Lands

**RAILWAY**  
**GUIDE**  
to the  
**ILLINOIS**  
**CENTRAL**  
**RAILROAD**  
**LANDS**

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NOTE.—It has been found impossible to answer the large number of letters that are daily received in reference to these Lands. To such this Pamphlet will be sent in reply to the questions asked.

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# THE LANDS

OF THE

## ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAIL-ROAD COMPANY.

### THE COMPANY'S TITLE TO THE LANDS.

THE Congress of the United States, on the 20th day of September, 1850, passed an act, granting to the State of Illinois *two millions five hundred and ninety-five thousand acres* of the Public Lands to aid in the construction of a long line of rail-road throughout the State.

On the 10th of February, 1851, the Legislature of the State of Illinois passed an act to incorporate "The Illinois Central Rail-Road Company," granting to them the large body of lands which had been given by the General Government to encourage this enterprise, which was so important to open the rich prairies for settlement. *The Company's title is therefore most unquestionable.*

### THE RAIL-ROAD ROUTE.

The Road commences at Dunleith, a town on the Mississippi river, in the extreme northwest of the State,

opposite the city of Dubuque, in Iowa. It passes south 16 miles through Galena, the centre of the great lead region of the West. Then easterly 50 miles, after which it takes a southerly course in an almost straight line to Cairo, the extreme southern point of the State. Cairo is situated at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, and is the point at which produce and merchandise are exchanged with the numerous steamboats navigating these great rivers. A branch of the road leaves the main line at Centralia, 118 miles above Cairo, diverging to the northeast, and terminating at Chicago, on Lake Michigan.

Two daily passenger trains are now running between Dunleith and Cairo, as also between Chicago and Dunleith, and Chicago and Cairo, besides numerous freight trains as required by the varying business of the Road.

The "Dixon Air Line," "Chicago, Burlington and Quincy," "Rock Island," "Chicago, Alton and St. Louis," "Great Western," "Terre Haute and Alton," and "Ohio and Mississippi" Rail-Roads, are all now in running order, east and west across the State, all connecting with the "Illinois Central Rail-Road," at various points. In addition to the above, the "Fort Wayne and Lacon," "Extension of Peoria and Oquawka," and "Atlantic and Mississippi Rail-Roads," now in course of construction, also connect with the "Illinois Central," and open up the entire State, at short distances apart. By completing 650 miles of North and South road, this Company has formed connections with all these East and West roads, enabling passengers or freight to reach any part of this State or the United States, with the greatest expedition.

At every ten miles throughout its entire length, com-

modious station and freight houses have been erected, and around almost every one of these, villages are rapidly springing up; many of them already containing a population of from 500 to 2,500 persons, where, two years ago, there was not a single house. The road is built in the most superior manner, and is stocked with the very best locomotive engines, passenger and freight cars. Charges for transportation of passengers and freight are moderate.

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### LOCATION OF THE LANDS.

The lands are situated on each side of the Rail-Road between Dunleith and Cairo, on the main line, and Chicago and Centralia on the Chicago branch. Traversing the entire State from north to south, it therefore passes through a great variety of climates, and purchasers are enabled to suit their inclinations in their selections. The road passes immediately over some of the lands; others vary in distance from it, from one to fifteen miles.

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### PRICES AND TERMS OF PAYMENT.

The prices vary from \$5 to \$25 per acre, according to location, quality, distance from stations, villages, &c. Contracts for deeds may be made until further notice; stipulating the purchase money to be made in five payments, each with the succeeding year's interest added in advance. The first payment to be made in two years from the date of the contract, and the others annually thereafter.

*Interest will be charged at only three per cent. per annum.* As a security for the performance of the contract,



the first two years' interest must be paid in advance. For instance, suppose you buy, on the 1st of March, 1856, eighty acres of selected prairie land, at \$10 per acre, on the foregoing terms. Your account, until a deed is given, would stand thus:

<i>March 1, 1856.</i>		Received contract for a Deed for 80 Acres of Land, at \$10 per acre, (\$800,) and paid two years' Interest, at three per cent. per annum, in advance,	\$48 00
" "	1858.	Paid first instalment of principal, being one-fifth of \$800, . . . . .	\$160 00
		One year's Interest in advance on balance due, (\$640,) at three per cent. per annum, . . . . .	19 20—179 20
" "	1859.	Paid second instalment, being one-fifth as above, . . . . .	160 00
		One year's Interest in advance on balance due, (\$480,) as above, . . . . .	14 40—174 40
" "	1860.	Paid third instalment, being one-fifth as above, . . . . .	160 00
		One year's Interest in advance on balance due, (\$320,) as above, . . . . .	9 60—169 60
" "	1861.	Paid fourth instalment, being one-fifth as above, . . . . .	160 00
		One year's Interest in advance on balance due, (\$160,) as above, . . . . .	4 80—164 80
" "	1862.	Paid fifth instalment, being one-fifth as above, and received Deed, . . . . .	160 00
Making the full payment, principal and interest, . . . . .			<u>\$896 00</u>

It must be understood, however, that at least one-tenth of the lands purchased shall be fenced and cultivated each year, for five years, so as to have one-half of the purchase under improvement by the time the last payment becomes due. It will also be borne in mind, that until the payments are made, and the deed of conveyance granted, these lands are not subject to taxation by the 22d Section of the Act of the Legislature, approved Feb. 10th, 1851.



## FUEL.

Great misconception exists at the East in regard to fuel; the want of which *is not* a matter of inconvenience to our farmers. Wood is delivered at the stations along the line of the road, at from \$3 to \$4 per cord. In the central and southern portions of the State, it is afforded in some places as low as \$2 per cord. Bituminous Coal, *of the best quality*, is found at various points along the road, and sells at from \$1 50 to \$4 per ton. Mines are now being worked at convenient distances all over the State, and the completion of the various East and West rail-roads, guarantees a constant supply at reasonable rates. Old residents in the State consider this Coal more economical as fuel, even when they have to haul it a considerable distance, than to cut wood on their own farms.

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## THE VALUE OF THE LAND FOR FARMING PURPOSES.

Illinois is known throughout the United States as the Garden State of the Union, and from the extraordinary fertility of its soil, is justly entitled to the name. Its vast tracts of rich rolling land were called by the first French settlers "Prairies," which, translated, means "natural meadows," and such they are; almost the whole State is a natural meadow, lying in high, beautifully rolling or gently undulating Prairies, with a soil of surpassing and inexhaustible fertility, all ready for the plough, without a rock, stump or even stone to interrupt its action. The difficulties experienced in the Eastern States, or in Western timbered States, in bringing lands under cultivation, are unknown here; the soil is readily turned over at the rate of two acres to two acres and a

half a day, by a heavy team of horses or two yoke of oxen, or it may be contracted to be worked at from \$2 to \$3 per acre, and an active practical man can readily cultivate ten acres here, against one in the Eastern or Middle States, taking them as they run, while the yield per acre will be infinitely greater. With *far less labor*, a farm purchased here at the low rates ruling at present, will yield more than one there valued at \$100 to \$150 per acre. The soil is a dark, rich vegetable mould, varying from two to eight feet in depth, capable of producing any thing in the greatest profusion, which will grow in these latitudes at all, and absolutely inexhaustible in its fertility. Instances could be multiplied of land cropped for twenty to thirty successive years, without the addition of a pound of manure, on which the growth, last season, was just as vigorous and the yield as profuse, as on any other of the series. Crossing the prairies, are belts of white oak, hickory, black walnut, ash and maple timber, of excellent quality, generally following the courses of the streams, varying from half a mile to five miles in width, in many places running far out on the prairie, or scattered in groves here and there over its surface. The State, as a general thing, *is well watered*, the streams usually running over sandy or stony beds; besides ponds of constant stock-water, which are found in all parts of the prairies. For household purposes, excellent soft water is found at from 10 to 25 feet in depth, generally springing from a strata of sand. Settlers from the East are always agreeably disappointed in the character of the land in this respect; a prevailing though erroneous impression having gone forth, that on the prairies good water was difficult to be found. The first crop, on newly-broken prairie, is generally *Sod*

*Corn*; as this requires *no cultivation* between planting and gathering, the farmer has ample time to get things comfortable about him, and prepare the land for sowing winter wheat before cold weather comes on. From this sod crop it is the expectation to realize sufficient to pay the cost of breaking, improvements and general expenses, placing the land in a high state of cultivation on the opening of the second season. It has averaged from thirty to thirty-five bushels per acre, often running up to fifty. Wheat averages from twenty-five to thirty bushels per acre, frequently reaching thirty-eight and forty, and during the past season has been selling, at the various rail-road stations, at from \$1 35 to \$1 50 per bushel. The second crop of corn averages from sixty to eighty bushels, frequently giving one hundred.

By the great net-work of rail-roads, reaching all portions of the State, every farmer is comparatively near a market; since, owing to the competition amongst Chicago buyers, each rail-road station becomes a local market for the producer, where Chicago prices, less the expense of transportation, can be readily commanded. Chicago is now *the greatest Grain depot in the World*: Thirteen rail-roads, all of great length, centre here, keeping all parts of this State and the United States in constant and close connection with it. Vessels have loaded at its docks direct for Liverpool, to go through, *via* the Lakes and St. Lawrence, without any transshipment of cargo; and from its superior harbor and extraordinary natural position, it must ever be the great centre of trade for the West and Northwest. To the settler in the central and southern portions of the State, peculiar advantages are opened by the completion of the "Ohio and Mississippi Rail-Road," and its connec-



tion with the "Illinois Central," enabling him to command the Chicago market to the North, St. Louis to the West, Cincinnati to the East, and the Mississippi towns and New-Orleans, *via* Cairo, to the South. This is a particularly desirable section for producing grain or choice fruit, or raising stock; and is already considerably settled by a most substantial farming population, which has grown up into comfort and affluence by its surprising advance in productiveness and wealth. The soil there is of a warmer nature, the winters mild and springs early; grain matures several weeks before that in the Genessee Vallies, and reaching the Eastern markets so much in advance of all others, commands the high rates always ruling before the incoming of new crops. Attention is requested to the letters from Messrs. Root, Arter, Gilson, Phillips and Williams, residents of this section, as illustrative of what may be there accomplished.

Land may be selected in accordance with the individual tastes of purchasers; some sections of country are best adapted to corn, others to wheat, some producing both equally well; some again seem peculiarly favorable to stock raising, others to fruit growing or fancy gardening; some portions are heavily timbered; on some, timber just covers one corner, or is scattered in occasional groups or groves. Frequently, in a single section of 640 acres, all these qualities are combined, together with living water; and the settler finds a home, only requiring a moderate expenditure of labor to establish him comfortably for life.

The system of long credits and low rates of interest established by the Company, is estimated by experienced farmers in the State, as being worth, to the actual settler, from thirty to fifty per cent. per annum, by enabling

him to invest his ready money immediately in the cultivation of the land, so that from his being able to take up so much more than the man who locks up his funds in a cash purchase, and the immense returns from land placed under cultivation, he soon finds himself far in advance. In proof of this, instances could be multiplied, of parties who have cleared the entire cost of their lands over and over again from a single crop; and the reader is referred to the letters appended to this pamphlet, for numerous examples of the more average success of prairie farming operations.

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#### ADVANTAGES OF SETTLING IN ILLINOIS.

Settlers should bear in mind that the country west of the Mississippi is not yet opened by rail-roads; and in the opinions of even the most sanguine, will not be in less than five years time. Also, that the lands along the water courses and proposed lines of rail-roads have been entered by speculators, and are held at high rates, and invariably *for cash*. The farmer, therefore, is either obliged to pay a *high cash price* for his land, or to go some distance from a market, thereby incurring great expense in the transportation of his material and crops. Now the very difference realized in the sales of crops in such a State as Illinois, opened as it is with rail-roads through every part, and markets at every station, over those ruling west of the river, would, in five years time, pay the difference in the first cost of land over and over again; and in the end, leave an estate, vastly more valuable, from its being so much nearer a market, in the centre of a well-improved, highly cultivated State, and forever clear of the expense which must be incurred by the tran-



shipment in crossing the Mississippi, and the freights to be paid on a greater distance of transportation.

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#### **ADVANTAGES FOR MECHANICS, LABORERS, &c., &c.**

There is work enough for all who can come; towns and villages are springing up with unexampled rapidity; great districts of country are being settled, and internal improvements keeping pace with the general advance of the population and wealth. For many years to come, in all human probability, this rate of progression and increase must be sustained, and mechanical labor continue to be in constant demand. The prudent, industrious laborer can also depend upon continued employment at fair wages; and if economical, may readily save sufficient from the proceeds of a year's work, to make the advance interest payment required by the Company to secure a piece of land for his farm; thus starting upon his career to independence and probable wealth.

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#### **MINERALS, COAL, LUMBER, &c., &c.**

The Company owns valuable tracts of Iron, Lead and Zinc Ores, also Coal; and forests of the most valuable White Oak, Black Walnut, Hickory and Cypress timber; rights, for the working of which, may be obtained upon application at this office. Excellent opportunities for erecting steam mills exist at points where a great local demand may be had, as well as rail-road facilities for conveying the lumber to all parts of the State. When the amount of building now going on throughout the State is taken into consideration, a glance at such opportunities must be sufficient for the practical operator.

## ILLINOIS

Is now in the start of its great advance towards becoming the first producing State in the Union. Having Lake Michigan on one side, furnishing a constant outlet for its produce, the Mississippi to the west, with its tributaries, the Illinois and Rock rivers, both navigable streams, running far into its interior, the Wabash on its eastern borders, and Ohio on the south, the natural facilities would seem unequalled in the world. But, added to these, is a system of internal improvements unsurpassed by any other of the States. The Illinois and Michigan Canal intersects it from east to west, and numerous rail-roads cross and re-cross in every direction. Its hamlets are becoming towns, its towns cities, and its vast prairies occupied and cultivated by a most substantial and respectable farming population. Everything seems to be flourishing, and wealth and general prosperity rewarding every adventure. For young men, wearied with struggling against the competitions and difficulties of advancement in the older States, this seems a field peculiarly suited to their aims and ambitions; requiring but a moderate investment of capital, large returns await the prudent and industrious operator. The reader can see, from the perusal of the letters accompanying this pamphlet, what has been accomplished by others, starting under far more adverse circumstances than now exist; and when, upon such a soil as this has been proved to be, attended with all the facilities, natural and artificial, which have been brought to bear upon it, the more scientific and economical system of agriculture pursued in older countries is directed—the reality must surpass the most sanguine expectations at present entertained.

## COST OF MOVING TO CHICAGO.

### FARES FROM NEW-YORK TO CHICAGO, BY THE DIFFERENT ROUTES

	First Class.	Emigrant.
Via Hudson River, New-York Central, Great Western, (Canada,) and Michigan Central Roads, (distance 961 miles,) . . . . .	\$22 00	\$10 00
Via Hudson River, New-York Central, Buffalo and Brantford, (Canada,) Great Western, (Canada,) and Michigan Central Roads, (967 miles,) . . . . .	22 00	10 00
Via Hudson River, New-York Central, Buffalo and Erie, Cleveland and Toledo, and Michigan Southern Roads, (distance 963 miles,) . . . . .	22 00	10 00
Via New-York and Erie to Niagara Falls. Great Western, (Canada,) and Michigan Central Rail-Roads, (distance 960 miles,) . . . . .	22 00	10 00
Via New-York and Erie to Buffalo, Buffalo and Brant- ford, (Canada,) Great Western, (Canada,) and Michi- gan Central Roads, (distance 950 miles,) . . . . .	22 00	10 00
Via New-York and Erie, Buffalo and Erie, Cleveland and Erie, Cleveland and Toledo, and Michigan South- ern Rail-Roads, (distance 960 miles,) . . . . .	22 00	10 00
In summer, the fares by the above routes will be about	18 00	8 00
In summer, passengers can go, via New-York and Erie, or Hudson River and New-York Central, to Buffalo, there connecting with Lake Erie steamers to Detroit or Monroe, thence by Michigan Roads to Chicago. Fare	16 00	8 00

In summer, also, passengers can take steamers on the Hudson River to Newburg, there connecting with New-York and Erie Road; or to Albany, there connecting with New-York Central Road. Fare, one dollar less than above.

Children over four years and under twelve years, half price; under four years, free. Extra baggage, over one hundred pounds, \$2 per hundred.

Freight on farming tools and furniture, \$1 50 per hundred pounds, which should be boxed in packages not too large, well hooped, and plainly marked with paint, and not with cards.

Prices from Boston and Philadelphia range at about the same rates.



Prices given for Corn, Wheat and Oats, at the Chicago Market,  
during the year of 1854.

MONTHS.	CORN.	SPRING WHEAT.	WINTER WHEAT.	OATS.
January, . . .	33 to 40	93 to 95	106 to 115	26 to 26 $\frac{1}{2}$
February, . . .	45 " 46	117 " 120	130 " 140	30 " 31
March, . . .	49 " 50	104 " 106	120 " 130	27 " 28 $\frac{1}{2}$
April, . . .	43 " 44	100 " 102	112 " 120	26 $\frac{1}{2}$ " 27
May, . . .	43 " 45	125 " 130	140 " 150	30 " 31
June, . . .	45 " 46	128 " 130	140 " 150	30 " 31 $\frac{1}{2}$
July, . . .	50 " 51	95 " 100	115 " 120	31 " 33
August, . . .	54 " 55	95 " 110	140 " 150	29 " 30
September, . . .	60 " 61	100 " 120	130 " 140	32 " 33
October, . . .	54 " 55	90 " 105	130 " 140	33 " 34
November, . . .	50 " 52	120 " 125	130 " 145	32 " 33
December, . . .	46 " 47	100 " 110	112 " 125	23 " 28

Prices given for Corn, Wheat and Oats, at the Chicago Market,  
during the year of 1855.

MONTHS.	CORN.	SPRING WHEAT.	WINTER WHEAT.	OATS.
January, . . .	48 to 50	113 to 120	128 to 135	27 to 28
February, . . .	48 " 50	115 " 120	125 " 135	27 " 28
March, . . .	50 " 55	115 " 130	125 " 140	34 " 35
April, . . .	55 " 62	135 " 150	150 " 187 $\frac{1}{2}$	40 " 48
May, . . .	72 " 78	150 " 170	160 " 175	45 " 52
June, . . .	70 " 80	150 " 162	158 " 165	40 " 48
July, . . .	70 " 75	150 " 156	155 " 165	45 " 50
August, . . .	63 " 68	110 " 125	133 " 140	26 " 30
September, . . .	63 " 68	103 " 130	120 " 155	26 " 30
October, . . .	63 " 68	128 " 160	155 " 180	25 " 28
November, . . .	60 " 65	145 " 152	155 " 162	26 " 31
December, . . .	50 " 55	128 " 136	135 " 145	26 " 29

**What Articles it will be best to bring out from the East.**

**FURNITURE.**—Highly finished and costly furniture is mostly all brought from the East, and sold at a large advance in the West. If you use such furniture, it will pay you to have what you require boxed up and sent out from the East. Plain, substantial furniture, such as is generally used in farm-houses, can be had here, nearly, if not quite as cheap as at the East. Stores of all kinds can be bought at reasonable prices.

**AGRICULTURAL TOOLS.**—Small agricultural tools are more extensively made at the East; but reaping, mowing and threshing machines are extensively made at the West. Spades, shovels, &c., you buy cheaper at the East; but ploughs of different kinds you can buy as reasonably here.

**COWS AND OXEN.**—Good milch cows can be bought at from \$15 to \$20. Good, well-broke working oxen can be had at from \$50 to \$80 per yoke.

**HORSES** vary from \$50 to \$75 each. At these prices, good, strong-limbed, healthy animals can be purchased, suitable for farms. Horses are extensively and cheaply raised on the prairies for the Eastern market, and afford large profit.

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**Reaping and Threshing with Machinery by Contract.**

**REAPING MACHINES** are almost altogether used at the West. They cost \$125. They will cut fourteen acres of wheat per day. Contracts for reaping are made at 62½ cents per acre. The contractor furnishes a driver, raker and horses; the farmer finds binders and shockers.



THRESHING MACHINES will thresh 300 bushels per day. It is generally contracted to be done at 4 cents per bushel, the contractor furnishing four horses and three hands; the farmer four more horses and five more hands, making in all eight hands, viz.: one driver, one feeder, one measurer, one to pitch sheaves, one to cut bands, and three to take away straw.

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### FENCING.

An abundant supply of lumber or timber for building or fencing can be easily procured; but the Osage Orange plant has been extensively introduced, and is rapidly supplanting all other kinds of fencing. Being, at the same time, more permanent and secure than any other, and highly ornamental, it must soon be universally employed. It can be raised by contract at 75 c. per rod; parties making a business of preparing the ground, setting out the plants, and cultivating and trimming them until a perfect hedge is produced for the settler. For this, one-third of the contract money is paid upon the setting out of the plants, and the balance when the fence is completed, without interest. Farmers preferring to raise plants from the seed, or procure them from nurseries, tending the hedge themselves, can probably procure their fence more economically than by contracting.

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### TOWN LOTS.

At about every ten miles along the road, the Company have erected large and commodious passenger and freight houses. Around most of these, dwellings and

stores have been erected since the completion of the rail-road. Merchants and mechanics are gathering at these stations, to accommodate the wants of the rapidly growing farming population surrounding them. At most of the stations the Company own the town sites. Lots are offered on extremely liberal terms, to any who wish to purchase and build on them.

Great opportunities are offered at these various stations for embarking in the mercantile business, dealing in lumber or grain, pork and beef-packing, or in a general produce business. A country so fruitful and productive, with a population rapidly filling it up, must make each and all of these profitable.

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#### FURTHER INFORMATION.

Sectional Maps of the Lands of the Company, showing the precise position of every piece of land in various parts of the State, owned by the Company, can be had at the Chicago Land Office, by remitting 50 cents in postage stamps. Plats of their towns at the various stations throughout the State can also be seen at that office. For any further information, apply personally or by letter, in English, French or German, to

JOHN WILSON,

LAND COMMISSIONER,

*Illinois Central R. R. Co., Chicago.*

LAND DEPARTMENT, ILL. C. R. R. Co., }  
*Chicago, January 1, 1856.*

OFFICE, after May 1st, 1856, in Illinois Central R. R. Depot Buildings.

## LETTERS IN REGARD TO SOIL, ETC.

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LETTER FROM G. W. GILSON.

CENTRALIA, MARION CO., ILLINOIS, }  
December 20, 1855. }

HON. JOHN WILSON,

*Land Commissioner :*

Dear Sir,—You have requested my views in regard to the advantages and prospects of Illinois; and it affords me great pleasure to be able to answer you. I have resided in the State for nineteen years, and may, therefore, be considered as possessing some knowledge of the subject I am writing about. I have seen many changes, and the results of many operations for advancing our position. I have seen the dreary times when our farmers had to live in isolated positions, haul their crops long distances to a market, and then sell at low rates, taking goods in exchange as part payment; and I see them now with rail-roads passing all around them, and markets established within the convenient reach of every one of them. Large as has been the accession to our population during a few years past, in my opinion the coming season will show an immensely greater increase still. The maps and advertisements of your Company have found their way into the hands of eager men, who, from the sterile hills of the Atlantic seaboard, view with amazement the rapid progress of this mighty valley of the West. The tide of prosperous commerce, which is sending its rich treasures to the East, from our ocean of agricultural wealth, in its return brings back the necessary means of increase; and thus each year is destined to add to the almost boundless development of the resources of our State.

Illinois is by far the most important agricultural State in the Union, and affords the greatest inducements to emigrants. It has more acres



of good arable, and fewer acres of waste land than any other State. It has, along its borders, and through its area, more miles of navigable streams, one of the largest and most important canals in the world, connecting the Northern lakes with the Mississippi river; and rail-roads in every direction, forming, as it were, a net-work of iron over its rich and fertile prairies. Mines of iron, coal, lead and other minerals, underlay these beautiful savannahs; and a salubrious, even climate makes redolent with health the happy families who here found their prosperous homes.

Iowa, though much talked of at the East, can hold no comparison with our "Prairie State." Settlers going over there find, to their cost, that the land speculator has been before them, selecting the desirable locations, and holding them at *cash prices*, equal to, and often far beyond the credit rates in Illinois. Along each stream, all possible future rail-road routes, and near every market station, he has been there first, and the settler must press further, further back, and doom himself to hard, unprofitable labor, in an isolated position for years to come. *Land speculators* will be the great curse of Iowa for a whole generation to come. They are locking up the resources of the State, preventing its improvement, and constituting themselves a perfect pest to the *actual settler*. Large tracts of land have been entered, and are now held by foreign capitalists, who intend to keep them out of the market until the improvements of others have enabled them to realize immense profits. Suppose a farmer from the East to make a selection in the midst of one of these tracts; he can have no knowledge of how the land around him may be held, and would have to waste his whole lifetime, adding to the wealth of another, from whom he derives no reciprocal advantage, but on the contrary, the greatest injury. Again, the prices are actually higher over there than here. I have known of lands, thirty miles from a market, with no timber or stream within ten miles, to be held at from \$10 a \$12 per acre—one-half cash, and the balance in six months or a year, with ten per cent. interest. The settler there would have to haul his lumber and building materials thirty miles, giving, to start with, \$22 and upwards for even ordinary lumber, bring his produce thirty miles again to market, and then receive 25 a 33 per cent. less for his crops, than, at the same time, the farmer in Central or Southern Illinois would be readily commanding. Allowing, again, that Iowa was well supplied with rail-roads now, (though such a state of things cannot be expected in less than ten years' time,) and allowing that the settler could at once secure a good location at fair prices, still his neighbor in Illinois would



have the advantage over him, for Chicago is now, and must ever be, the centre and gathering point for all the produce West, Northwest and Southwest of it, and will consequently fix the standard price for this whole region of country ; and all the producer can hope to get for his crops will be *Chicago prices, less the cost of transportation*, leaving the balance always against the farmer, as he recedes from the centre of trade.

Again, in Iowa he will have to pay far higher for all agricultural tools, and machinery, all materials for building, as well as the little luxuries of life ; find it difficult, if not impossible, to educate his children ; and, in short, for many years suffer all the social, agricultural and general privations and wants of an entirely new State.

Now turn to Illinois. Here we have such a net-work of rail-roads, not on paper, but in actual operation, that it is almost impossible for a settler to get many miles away from one. At every station his produce will command *hard cash*, at nearly Chicago rates. He is in the midst of the most flourishing State in the Union ; in a perfectly healthy climate, with a rich soil, plenty of fine timber and good water ; abounding in coal and minerals ; and where he can obtain the best of land on long credits, with low rates of interest and easy payments. How much better, then, to settle here ; for the next ten years he can make far more per annum than by going West of the Mississippi ; and even should he pay a few dollars more per acre, on a long credit, the difference in receipts on a single crop would more than repay it.

By the terms upon which your company disposes of its lands, the speculator is shut out. Let the settler take this into consideration ; let him look at the advantages of being surrounded by actual farmers only, who will aid immediately in making roads, building churches and schools, and all other local improvements ; let him study your terms for lands ; here he can buy on your six years' credit—only pay three per cent. per annum for the use of his money, and at once invest his means in cultivating the purchase. So he can afford to buy double the amount in Illinois that he can in Iowa ; and before his payments are completed, realize at least two hundred per cent. on the money thus used in cultivation.

By far the most valuable and desirable portion of our State has as yet received but little attention ; and many of our best farming lands are still held at very low figures. The reason for this is, that the tide of emigration, years ago, before rail-roads were even thought of out here, poured in from the Lakes and Northern Indiana, seeking the Illinois and Rock rivers to furnish an outlet for their crops. Year after year settlers

came along, locating in the neighborhood of these pioneers, and thus forming quite large settlements, which have ever since attracted more or less of the passing emigrants. Some of these centres were also formed in Southern Illinois, but not having the large navigable streams so near at hand, did not progress so rapidly as the others. Now, however, the streams cease to be essential, the rail-road having furnished the necessary outlet; and these fairest sections of the whole State lie in rich luxuriance, inviting the energy of the farmer only to return to him their choicest rewards. Southern Illinois has more timber, and a soil better adapted to the production of wheat, corn, fruits or grasses than the northern parts of the State. The winters are far shorter and less severe; and while by rail-road the settler finds easy access to Chicago and the East, he is also in close proximity to the uninterrupted navigation of the South. Our prairies are not so large as those in the North, are more gently undulating, well watered by small streams, and have the timber scattered over them to better advantage. Our climate is mild, regular and healthy. We are exempt from sudden and severe changes, and able to pursue farming operations to far greater advantage, and vastly greater profit. Our stock requires but little housing or feeding up, and can therefore be raised more economically, while we have constantly the choice of the four great markets, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati and New-Orleans, for the disposal of our produce. If Eastern farmers would give this section a fair and full examination, I am persuaded they would settle here at once; and I know the results of their operations could not fail to be highly satisfactory.

Such, sir, are the results of my observation and experience in Illinois and the West. They are at your disposal if you think fit to use them, while I remain,

Yours, very truly,

GEORGE W. GILSON.

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#### LETTER FROM B. G. ROOTS.

TAMAROA, PERRY CO., ILL., }  
Dec. 27, 1855.

Hon. JOHN WILSON,

*Land Commissioner :*

Dear Sir,—In March, 1837, I left Massachusetts for Illinois. During the first eighteen months, my profession of civil engineer required me to

be constantly in or near the *swamp and overflowed lands* in the extreme southeasterly portions of this State. I did not, however, find even that section as sickly as I had expected, though an occasional shake admonished me that while engaged in that occupation, my family had better remain in comfortable quarters at home. Seeing that this State offered superior advantages to men with only a small capital, I was anxious to locate in it; but as fully determined to run no risk as to the health of my family. After extensive examinations, I selected the tract upon which I now reside, and removed my family from the East to it. I have since become well acquainted with all counties south and east of the Illinois river, and have been in most of the counties in the south half of Wisconsin, but have seen none healthier than this. I went through the country above spoken of before we had rail-roads. I travelled with my own conveyance, and stopped at the farm-houses at night; every house was a *traveller's home*—for there were few taverns. From all that I have seen, I fully believe that the prairies in the south part of this State are quite as healthy as any other section. We find abundance of good water by digging—the average depth of wells in this vicinity being from 12 to 25 feet. The prairie furnishes excellent pasturage; but it dries up earlier in the fall (unless we have more rain than usual) than tame pastures. This year, cattle did well upon the prairies, until late in December; but it is generally expedient to feed some from the middle of November until the latter part of March. A pasture of blue grass will sustain, in good condition, mules, colts, sheep, dry cows and steers, ten months in the year. As we had no means of exporting wheat until the Illinois Central Rail-Road opened an outlet, it was not sown extensively until the fall of 1854; that sowing averaged from 20 to 25 bushels per acre, of most excellent wheat; most of which was manufactured into flour, and sold in the city of New-York, before the crop in the northern parts of the State was even cut.

Fencing is the hardest work which a new settler here has to perform. Good white oak rails, laid up in fence, where it is required, are worth from \$2 to \$3 per hundred. To lessen the cost of fencing, it is very desirable for several friends to settle together, so that the land at first may be enclosed in one common field. 4,704 rails will fence 20 acres; 6,720 will fence 40 acres; 13,440 rails will fence 160 acres; 28,880 rails will fence one section, or 640 acres.

The spring following that which the prairie sod is broken up, a *Mac-lura* hedge should be set out around the portion chosen by each individual. Many of my neighbors make their own hedges; but as a man



can always dispose of his labor to advantage here, I believe it cheaper to buy it than to make it. Hedging has become a trade, to which a class of men devote themselves. They furnish the plants, set them in the ground, and cultivate them for four years, at 15 cents per rod a year; making the whole cost of hedge 60 cents per rod. At the expiration of four years, when the last payment upon the hedge is due, it is a perfect barrier against bulls, pigs and all other animals. The rails of which the outside fence was made are then sold to somebody else, or used to make interior fences. They will last for twenty years, and I know not how much longer. Sixteen years ago, I purchased an *old improvement*. Most of the rails with which it was enclosed are still good.

New prairie is broken to advantage from the 15th of April to the 10th of July, but I prefer to have it broken from the 10th of May to the 10th of June. That which is broken previous to the 10th of June, I plant in corn, which yields from 20 to 45 bushels per acre. As it receives no cultivation after it is planted, it is more affected by good or bad seasons than crops which are cultivated. That which is broken up after the 10th of June is sown with wheat in September, and always yields well. Corn which is planted before the 20th of May is often cut up and wheat sown on the same ground in September or October; but wheat which is sown so late is sure not to produce as well as that sown early. Oats do not do very well upon prairie, until the ground has been cultivated two or three years; but the year following that on which it is first broken up, it is in excellent condition to produce wheat, barley, corn, flax-seed, castor beans, and every kind of garden vegetable which is raised in New-England, and excellent sweet potatoes in abundance.

With a good plough and one pair of good horses, one man can break up one and a half acres per day of the new prairie. A good yoke of cattle will break up nearly the same quantity of ground. Two good yoke of cattle will break two acres per day. Previous to 1853, the customary price for breaking prairie was from \$1 50 to \$2 per acre; but in 1853 the common price was \$2 50 per acre; and, as the demand for labor always exceeds the supply, I think it will not be less than this sum for several years to come.

Common farm hands receive from \$110 to \$130 per annum, and their board. I employ a good practical working farmer, who takes charge of every thing pertaining to the farm. I furnish him house, garden and fruit trees, free of rent, and pay him \$250 per annum. He, with the aid of a boy twelve years of age, five breeding mares and \$10 worth of



occasional aid, attends to forty acres in corn, ten in wheat, ten in oats, six in flax, (cultivated only for the seed,) ten in meadow of old ground, and breaks up and plants in sod corn twenty acres of new prairie. We commence planting corn from the 1st to the 20th of April, and finish from the 1st to the 10th of June. I once raised an excellent crop planted on the 23d of June. I cut up my corn stalks near the ground, before the frost comes, and shock it up. We pull the ears from that which is to be fed to dry cows and steers, who do well on the fodder and such nubbins as are left upon it. If we wish to fatten cattle in the winter, we give them the fodder with the ears all remaining on it.

At the stations on the rail-road we can sell every thing we can spare at nearly Chicago or New-Orleans prices, less the cost of transportation. I believe the charge from here to Chicago is 24 cents per bushel.

We raise what is here called sugar-corn, to eat green. We have it fit for cooking from the 20th of June till October. We raise two crops of this and one crop of turnips on the same ground in one season. We receive, in excellent condition, fresh fish from the lake, via Chicago, and tropical fruits via New-Orleans and Cairo. The facility with which we dispose of whatever we have to sell, and procure whatever we wish to purchase, the mildness of the climate and the fertility of the soil, render this a most desirable residence. If farmers will once visit us, they will abandon all idea of settling in Iowa. After a farm is once fenced, there is very little use for timber land. *Coal here is rapidly taking the place of wood, as fuel. I buy coal at such a rate, that it is cheaper to burn it than to prepare wood for stoves and fire-places. Coal is so abundant that all Southern Illinois will always be supplied at a low rate.*

Numerous saw-mills are being erected in the timber along the rail-road, south of Big Muddy River. Some are completed, and lumber yards are established at almost every station, where the pine of the North meets the poplar, cypress, black walnut, sycamore, maple and oak, from the South. There are saw-mills in the smaller portions of timber which occur at short intervals in this part of the State, but they are fully occupied in supplying the demand in their immediate vicinity.

I planted an orchard of apple and peach trees in 1843. The peach trees commenced bearing in 1845, and the apple in 1847; and, although the yield is not uniform in amount, we have enough excellent fruit every year. My cherries, currants, gooseberries and grapes have received very little attention, but they yield abundantly. Clover is a difficult crop to start well, but when once well set, it thrives. Timothy, red-top

orchard grass and blue grass, set easily after the prairie has been cultivated, and yield well. The greatest difficulty here is the want of labor. It is so easy to become the owner of land, that almost every man who is worth hiring, becomes the owner of a farm within a few years, and wants to hire laborers himself.

Very respectfully,

B. G. ROOTS.

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LETTER FROM JOHN WILLIAMS.

NEW-ALBANY, COLES COUNTY, ILL., }  
December, 23, 1855.

HON. JOHN WILSON, *Land Commissioner*:

Sir,—I will now comply with your request for my experience as a farmer in this State; at the same time giving you permission to use this letter as you may judge will tend most to the interest of the State, by inducing industrious men living in the Eastern States, and possessing but moderate means, to come on to these rich prairies, where, with but a small investment, they can build up, by their energy and prudence, comfortable homes and handsome farms. And not only will these do well, but also for the man of wealth, ambitious of an extended field for operation, no place can be more desirable. To give one instance. Let a man purchase a good stock location, and invest his money the coming spring in young cattle, at a cost of from \$2 50 a \$3 00 per hundred, gross weight; the grass will make an increase of 50 per cent. on the investment by fall, with the sole cost of a boy to see after them, that they keep together by day and are pounded at night. I bought, last fall, one hundred and twelve head of cattle, at a cost of \$2 30 per hundred, or about \$25 50 per head, and have since sold them for beef, to be delivered from the 25th to 28th of April, at \$4 25 per hundred, gross—with the hogs that follow them at the same rate; enabling me, as you can readily see, to cash my grain, at a first rate price. At my farm the cattle will bring me from \$48 to \$50 per head, besides the increase on the hogs.

I have lived in Illinois about thirty years, and have seen some ups and downs in that time. I moved from Kentucky, and settled first in Vermillion County; after living there thirteen years I moved into Champaign County, lived there three years and then went over into Platt

County, Missouri; not having seen the land there before moving out, and finding it did not equal my expectations, I returned to Illinois and settled in Coles County, where I have remained ever since; you can therefore see that I have been over some of the West in search of the best place to make the Almighty dollar, and as I think I have found it, I will here say that after a man has lived in the State of Illinois, and farmed its rich soil for a few years, he will find it hard work to hunt up a better country. When I first settled in Vermillion County, the representation of our district comprised all the State lying up along the lake, including Chicago, which then consisted only of the old block fort on the lake shore; at that time we, in the centre of the State, had no market for any of our produce; we had no rail-roads, and were forced to kill our hogs at home, team them to Terre Haute, sixty miles, and then get \$1 50 to \$2 per hundred weight, taking half the amount in store goods at a very high figure. So farmers had to work along in those days. I have known corn to sell for 5 to 8 cents per bushel, and yet even then they did well, from the fact that they could raise every thing they wanted to eat, and in abundance to.

As I said, I have seen some ups and downs in Illinois. In 1836 speculations ran high in land and town sites; then the legislature passed an act authorizing the construction of some thirteen hundred miles of rail-road, of which none was built, excepting a short line from Springfield to the Illinois river, while the expectation of a high rate of taxation turned the course of emigration into Iowa; and so it ran on for a few years, until people found out that in passing into Iowa they left behind them the best and richest State, and that all their ideas about high taxation were totally wrong. Then came the act of Congress authorizing the Legislature of the State to negotiate with a company for the building of a long line of rail-road north and south through the State, and the completion of this has ushered in the new era of prosperity for our State. I believe we have now about twenty-five hundred miles of finished rail-road, and some six or seven hundred miles in process of building, which gives us a market right at our own doors for all we can raise. Times have changed, indeed, sir, since I commenced in the State. Instead of 5 or 8 cents a bushel for our corn, we now get 25 to 40. Instead of 25 to 38 cents for wheat, we now have \$1 25 to \$1 60 per bushel; and in place of spending some four days getting to Chicago, we now go up on a morning, do our trading, and get back the next day.

I can raise on my farm, and have done it, 60 to 100 bushels of corn



to the acre; 30 to 40 bushels of wheat per acre, and every kind of vegetables in the greatest abundance. I harvested off my farm, this season, 15,000 bushels of corn; two men raised for me, with but little more than their own labor, about 7,000 bushels of corn and oats; this corn is now worth, in the crib, over 25 cents per bushel. My neighbors raised from 25 to 38 bushels of wheat per acre, and sold it on the spot at from \$1 25 to \$1 30 per bushel. Early in the season, Mr. Cuthbertson, a neighbor of mine, sold the crop of wheat off of 50 acres of land, as it stood, for \$1,500 cash. I will just say, sir, that in Coles, Champaign, Vermillion, Moultrie and the adjoining Counties, are as good lands as the sun shines upon; the soil is rich and deep; timber first rate; water fine and sweet; health as good as anywhere in the States; and if a man can't come here and clear the whole cost of his land, improvements and all expenses, from two or three crops, he ought to be hooted out of the State as not fit to be called a farmer. I have never been sick one whole day in thirty years, and there has been but one death in this neighborhood this season. A man can now come into this State and buy lands even as high as \$15 per acre, and make them pay for themselves far more easily than I could when I bought lands at \$2 to \$3 per acre. My advice to farmers in the East is to leave their rocks and hills, where they are just grubbing out a living, and come on to these splendid prairies as they lie all ready for the plough, and where every thing which the farmer plants yields such an abundant return. Last spring I thought I would go over into Iowa and see what the farmers were doing there, so I went, and I'll tell you what I found. The land was held at higher prices *for cash*, than you could buy on credit in this State; all the best of it was in the hands of speculators; it was not a good winter wheat country; fruit did not grow so as to be depended upon; there was no interior market for produce, except the demand caused by emigration; lumber, such as pine boards, cost about \$75 per thousand feet, at the Fort, and salt \$10 per barrel. There is more timber in my county, (Coles,) than I saw in any four in Iowa, and I came back perfectly satisfied that there is no State in the whole West equal to Illinois, after all that can be said in favor of the others.

These, gentlemen, are my scattering thoughts on things as they have passed before my own eyes during thirty years residence in this State, or travelling over the neighboring ones. You can use them as you see fit, while I subscribe myself,

Yours, very truly,

JOHN WILLIAMS.



## LETTER FROM REV. JOHN S. BARGER,

GIVING HIS EXPERIENCE IN BREAKING UP AND CULTIVATING A FARM IN  
THE VICINITY OF THE RAIL-ROAD.

CLINTON, DE WITT Co., ILLINOIS, }  
January 22, 1855. }

HON. JOHN WILSON, *Land Commissioner* :

Dear Sir,—Yours of the 8th ult. was received a few days since, and I now answer it, as soon as has been consistent with other obligations.

The statistical information, in the form of facts, substantiated by farmers throughout the State, which you propose embodying in your contemplated circular, designed to show "the result of well-directed efforts in Illinois farming," and to which I have the honor of being requested to contribute, I regret to say, I am not so well prepared to give in detail, as many others, from whom doubtless you will obtain it. Nevertheless, I may at least say, that in your very complimentary remark, you judge correctly in part, that "among those who have broken up the wild prairie, and by judicious management realized large profits," I have been "very successful." Yet, when the fact is known, as it should be, in order to form a correct judgment in my case, that I have been an itinerant minister in the M. E. Church, without any cessation, since 1823, (the 20th year of my age,) it will be reasonably concluded that I would have been yet more successful had my efforts and management been directed by the superior skill of a well-trained and practical farmer.

But, as you have particularly requested the facts in my own case, as heretofore explained to you, I here offer these facts, taken from my memoranda, for whatever use you may think proper to make of them, and will leave the other details you desire to other hands, better prepared to give them.

From 1848 to 1850, I purchased, in De Witt County, and nearly adjoining Clinton, (the County seat,) 400 acres of fine farming land, through which the Illinois Central Railway passes, and, in the vicinity, three timbered lots, containing 140 acres, making 540, at a cost of \$1,513 19. In the spring of 1853 I determined to make my farm, and accordingly contracted for the breaking of 300 acres, at \$600; also, for making 400 rods of fence, at \$4 75 per 100 rails in the fence, \$494 19; making, together, \$1,094 19. Having obtained the privilege of joining

to 720 rods of fence on adjoining farms, I thus enclosed 360 acres, and had 280 prepared for seeding.

The breaking was done from the 27th of May to the 9th of July. The greater portion of this ploughed land might, therefore, have been planted in corn, and harvested in time for seeding with wheat; and thus I might have added considerably to the avails of the first year, had I not been 80 miles distant, engaged in the labors of the Jacksonville district.

I paid for seeding 300 acres, . . . . .	\$230 00	
“ “ 325 bushels seed wheat, . . . . .	243 75	
Add the cost of making the farm, . . . . .	1,094 19	\$1,567 94
I paid for harvesting, threshing, sacking and delivering at the Clinton Depot, distant from the farm from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, . . . . .	1,650 00	
Making the entire expenditure, . . . . .		3,217 94
Sold at the Clinton Depot, $4,378\frac{5}{8}$ bushels wheat, for . . . . .	4,378 82	
I kept for bread, . . . . .	50 00	
Making the gross income of the first year of . . . . .		4,428 82
From which take the entire expenditure, . . . . .		3,217 94
And you have the nett proceeds of the first year, . . . . .		\$1,210 88
To which add the cost of making the farm, . . . . .		1,094 19
Making entire avails of the first year, . . . . .		<u>\$2,305 07</u>

Furthermore, to do justice to the productiveness of the soil, and to show what the well-directed efforts and judicious management of a well-trained and practical Illinois farmer would have done, it should be stated that, at least in my judgment, some 1,500 bushels of wheat were wasted by untimely and careless harvesting and threshing, equal to \$1,500 net proceeds. Then add \$55 33, excess of payments for ploughing and seeding only 280 acres, which a skilful farmer would have known before making his contracts, and you have a loss, which ought to have been a gain, of \$1,555 33. This amount saved would have showed the avails of the first year's operation, on 280 acres of the farm, to have been \$3,860 40.

Now, sir, if one under such circumstances, with but little more than a theoretical knowledge of farming, has succeeded even thus well, hav-

ing hired all the labor, and mostly at very high prices, how much larger profits might have been realized by a skillful and practical farmer, devoting his whole time and attention to his appropriate occupation. How much more successful thousands of farmers and farmers' sons on our Eastern seaboard and in our Eastern States might be, were they, or could they, be induced to move on, and apply their skill, industry and economy in the cultivation of the rich and productive prairies of Illinois?

Let them come, by thousands and tens of thousands—there is room enough—and examine the country. They will find rich lands and good water, and general health, almost everywhere. This is not a wilderness. They will find schools and churches springing up in almost every settlement made, and now being made, throughout the State. Illinois is not a moral desolation. It literally and spiritually “blossoms as the rose.” Let them come to Chicago, and go to Galena, and visit Cairo. But let them not remain at either place, unless they choose. The Illinois Central Rail-Road and its branches traverse the finest portion of the globe. Let them glide through our State, on these and other roads, now checking almost the entire of this “Garden of the Lord,” and stop where they will, to “examine the land, of what sort it is,” and they will no longer consent to dig among the rocks, and plough the sterile lands of their forefathers. But they will long bless the day when they found for themselves and their children such comfortable homes as they still may obtain, in this rich and beautiful prairie State, destined soon to compare with, nay, to surpass, in all the most desirable respects, the most prosperous State in the Union.

I will now give you a concise history of the operations of Mr. Funk. Both before and since his marriage, he had made rails for his neighbors at twenty-five cents per 100. But when the lands where he lived came into market, 25 years ago, he had saved of his five years' earnings \$1,400, and says, if he had invested it all in lands he would now have been rich. With \$200 he bought his first quarter section, and loaned to his neighbors \$800, to buy their homes; and with the remaining \$400 he purchased a lot of cattle. With this beginning, Mr. Funk now owns 7,000 acres of land, has near 2,700 in cultivation, and his last year's sale of cattle and hogs, at the Chicago market, amounted to a little over \$44,000.

Mr. ISAAC FUNK, of Funk's Grove, nine miles distant from his brother Jesse, and ten miles northwest from Bloomington, on the Mississippi and Chicago Rail-Road, began the world in Illinois at the same time, having a little the advantage of Jesse, so far as having a little borrowed



capital. He now owns about 27,000 acres of land, has about 4,000 acres in cultivation, and his last sales of cattle at Chicago amounted to \$65,000.

These families have enjoyed almost uninterrupted health. Mr. Isaac Funk has had 10 children, and Mr. Jesse Funk 8. In the family of Isaac, one died of fever; and in that of Jesse, one by an accidental fall from a wagon.

Yours, truly,

JOHN S. BARGER.

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### LETTER FROM JAMES PHILLIPS.

NASHVILLE, WASHINGTON Co., ILL., }  
*December 26th, 1855.*

J. B. AUSTIN, Esq.:

Dear Sir,—For the information of those who design coming West, I forward you the following thoughts about our country—a portion of this great valley which has been, to a great extent, hitherto overlooked by emigrants. Until quite recently we were, to a great degree, cut off from a market. Produce could not be transported to our great thoroughfares, the freight, in many instances, costing more than the article would bring when taken to the nearest shipping point. Now, however, the case is quite different. A market has been created by rail-roads at our own homes, for every article the tiller of the soil produces. Formerly our farmers raised their products, then fed the same to their horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, &c., looking forward from one to four years for a time when this stock could be advantageously cashed. Now his corn, wheat, oats, beans, hay, &c., command fair rates at the nearest depot so soon as delivered, thus giving him a quick return, instead of the long one he previously received.

Our climate is temperate. We neither have the protracted cold of the lakes of the North, nor the sultry heat of the South. This country will compare favorably with any other portion of the Mississippi valley for health. We are exempt from the consumption of the Eastern States, from the low fevers of the Southern States, and comparatively free from those miasmatic diseases of the Western States in their early settlement; and in proportion as our country is tilled, as the primeval surface gives place to cultivation, will these latter disappear also. Excellent water is obtained at an average depth, almost anywhere, of



twenty feet. Our soil is of an excellent quality, surface pleasantly undulating, enough so to avoid swamps on the one hand, and not too broken on the other. Timber is both good and plentiful. Some of our prairies are a little larger than we could desire, but in them hedges thrive for fencing, so well, indeed, that many of our farmers are hedging who have an abundance of timber near by their farms. Our population is rapidly increasing by the influx of an intelligent and well-to-do class of people.

We have the land here that can now produce 100 bushels corn to an acre, or at least the stalks are now standing from which Mr. G——, our sheriff, gathered that amount. There is a farmer near by me, who ploughed up in the summer a piece of land of a medium quality; in the fall, he put it down in wheat, and the following harvest (the last summer) he took off between thirty and forty bushels to the acre, and this without any particular or special care about it. Oats, rye, barley, buckwheat, beans, peas, potatoes and most garden vegetables, that grow in temperate climates, flourish here luxuriantly. A friend of mine, last spring, a young farmer, planted a peck of potatoes; his family consisted of himself, wife and two children; they made almost daily use of his potatoes from the time there were any small ones to be found, until digging time, when he took out nine bushels of potatoes for winter use. A remark here: None of these lands were manured; that is a word not to be found in our farmer's lexicon. Not that manuring would not pay, but what is the use? All we have to do is to turn down with a sod plough at the rate of two or three acres a day, stick in the corn with an axe, and come out in the fall for the crop. Or, if we wish to sow wheat, all we have to do is to harrow a couple of times, and sow down the wheat. No lands, perhaps, under the sun, are capable of being rendered more fertile and productive by rotation of crops and all the appliances of scientific husbandry. ✓

There is Mr. K——, who came here a poor adventurer, with nothing of this world's goods; he went to farming, continued it assiduously, turning his farm produce into stock, his stock into cash, and his cash into lands. He is now worth about fifty thousand dollars.

A son of the preceding commenced about ten years ago doing business for himself. He had about one thousand dollars to start with, and has gone on increasing his wealth at the rate of a thousand a year. This was done exclusively by farming.

Colonel P—— came here as one of the early pioneers of this country, went to tilling the land, followed it up to the present time

engaging in nothing else; he is now worth about twenty thousand, having begun with less than one hundred dollars. These are a few of many that might be given. One remark about this country: One fair crop of any of the usual grains grown here is worth, when harvested, what the land will cost; so that an emigrant can easily calculate what he can do on an average. Thus, if he can plant and till one hundred acres of land by putting in corn or wheat, he can pretty safely estimate that when he threshes his wheat, or cribs his corn, that it will be worth the prime cost of his one hundred acres of land. This is not all; for when his land is ploughed and fenced it is worth double what it was before subjugation.

In conclusion I would say, we are not crowded by reason of the density of our population. We need a large increase of intelligent, industrious, persevering young farmers. As yet but about one-fourth of our lands are fenced; and we have but a tithe of the wealth and population we shall have when this great valley shall become the agricultural centre of the earth, and Illinois its most favored spot.

Yours, respectfully,

JAMES PHILLIPS.

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#### LETTER FROM A. J. GALLOWAY.

FARM IN THE VICINITY OF THE COMPANY'S LANDS.

EWINGTON, EFFINGHAM CO., ILL., }  
February 12, 1855.

Hon. JOHN WILSON,

*Land Commissioner, Illinois Central Rail-Road:*

Dear Sir,—My residence in Illinois began in April, 1837. During the first four years I resided in Wabash County, after which I removed to the northern part of the State, and in 1842, purchased some lands in La Salle County. From that until the present time, I have been making, cultivating and extending my farm.

The subsoil of the prairie land throughout the State, with a few exceptions, is a compact clay, through which water settles but slowly, thus securing great durability to the natural soil, as well as effectually preventing the escape of artificial manures, by the process of leeching. Upon very level prairie, this characteristic causes the land to be too wet for the profitable cultivation of the several kinds of grain, without some

special preparation ; this, however, may be almost universally overcome by manuring, and deep and thorough ploughing ; deep ploughing alone will prove effectual in a large majority of instances.

South of the parallel of forty-one degrees north latitude, the staple production is, and must continue to be, Indian corn or maize, though almost all grain and vegetables, grown in a temperate climate, may be profitably cultivated, and should not be neglected.

During my residence upon my farm in La Salle County, our average crop of corn, say on a field of eighty acres, did not vary much from fifty bushels per acre. Winter wheat, (for I think spring wheat a nuisance,) upon a field of thirty acres, varied in different years from nineteen to twenty-three bushels per acre, harvested with McCormick's Reaper, and threshed and separated by machines built at Alton, Illinois. Oats varied from forty to sixty bushels per acre, and in one instance, upon a small lot of four acres, I obtained almost one hundred bushels per acre.

My estimate for the cost of production and preparation for market, previous to 1850, after allowing thirty-three per cent. of the crop for the use of the land, was forty cents per bushel for wheat, and about fifteen cents per bushel for corn and oats.

I could usually obtain good farm hands (men) at one hundred to one hundred and twenty dollars per year, with board and lodging furnished.

The many difficulties with which a single hand upon a farm has to contend, render it hard to say what one man, with a pair of horses, can cultivate properly—certainly not to exceed forty acres ; whereas, two men, with four horses, could readily manage a hundred acres, and three men, with about five horses, one hundred and sixty acres, in addition to the usual amount of land devoted to meadow and grasses.

In reply to your ninth interrogatory, I would say that south of the parallel I have mentioned, nearly one-half of the whole farm devoted to grain and vegetables, should be planted in corn, and three-fourths of the remainder in wheat and oats, in about equal quantities. The cultivation of barley, rye, potatoes, &c., should be governed by the character of the farm, its position in relation to markets, and somewhat by the tastes, education and habits of the farmer.

In La Salle County, where woodland is not so plenty as it is in this region, a good common rail fence would cost about seventy-five cents per rod, but I have contracted for a number of miles of such fence, eight rails high, staked and riddered, with a sound block under each corner, to be built in this and some other counties for the Illinois Central Rail-Road, at the rate of fifty cents per rod.



I have tried different methods of turning up or breaking prairie sod, and am fully satisfied that where the prairie is clear, that is, destitute of hazel bushes or other woody growth, a man who understands the business, with a good pair of horses and a plough properly constructed, such as was manufactured a few years since in Indian Town, Bureau County, can do the work better and cheaper than in any other way that has ever come under my observation. One acre and a half per day is the fair average for such a team. Prairie should always be broken between the 10th of May and the 20th of June, in the latitude of La Salle County. In this county the work should be completed as early as the 10th of June.

For persons wishing to make a settlement in Illinois, I should advise about the same course for almost any part of the State with which I am acquainted. The first thing such person should do is to make a personal examination of the country, and select a location. Then, if he should have the means to spare, and could purchase forty or eighty acres of good prairie land, not more than five miles from where materials for building, fencing and fuel can be obtained, at reasonable rates, and get a long credit upon three-fourths of the purchase money, I should advise him to secure it at once.

He should then procure a good pair of horses and wagon, a cow, a few pigs, and some poultry, and two good ploughs, one for breaking prairie and the other for cultivating land already subdued. Thus provided, it would be well if he could rent a small tenement with a few acres of improved land near his own, for a year or two, until he could get his farm under way. But if no such tenement could be obtained, he should at once build a cheap house upon his own land, and push forward his improvements.

Prairie sod broken in the manner and at the time heretofore stated, will be sufficiently rotten to cross plough as early as the tenth of August. This cross ploughing should not be neglected, and in the north of the State wheat should be sown broad-cast, and harrowed both ways, or drilled in by a proper machine, about the first of September. Wheat sown upon such land in this manner, rarely fails to produce an excellent crop. The next two years after the wheat is taken off the ground, two good crops of corn may be produced, with comparatively little labor. Oats is perhaps the proper grain for the fourth crop; and by that time, if the new settler be a man of reasonably perceptive powers, he will have made himself sufficiently well acquainted with the soil, climate, rotation of crops, etc., to manage his farm to good advantage. Much may be



learned from the many agricultural periodicals with which our country abounds, and no farmer should be without one or more of these valuable aids. But, to succeed well, he must thoroughly investigate the local peculiarities of his own neighborhood, and especially those of his own farm.

There is a general and growing disposition throughout the State to educate; and in a very few years all the educational facilities which exist in the Eastern States will be at the command of the citizens of Illinois.

There is little disease at any time in the State, which may not be traced, directly or indirectly, to derangement in the biliary organs, and much of this should, no doubt, be attributed to the free use of heavy bread, strong coffee, and a large amount of animal food, to the partial or total exclusion of vegetable diet. I think I am free from prejudice when I say that, except in the valleys of the larger streams, but more especially upon the high rolling prairies of Middle and Northern Illinois, a more healthy country is not to be found, even in the mountainous districts of the older States.

In these hasty lines I have endeavored to answer some of your interrogatories as categorically as their nature would permit, without attempting to sustain my opinions by argument. If they should prove of the least service to you or others, I shall be more than compensated for the very little time and attention which I have felt at liberty to bestow upon them.

Respectfully,

Your ob't serv't,

A. J. GALLOWAY.

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LETTER FROM C. G. TAYLOR.

PLEASANT RIDGE, ROCK ISLAND Co., ILL., }  
*February 8th, 1855.*

HON. JOHN WILSON:

Dear Sir,—I was raised in Jefferson County, N. Y., in and among the log cabins, stumps, rocks and snow banks. My father was a farmer. I know full well what it costs to farm in Northern New-York, from the felling of the first tree to the farm under good cultivation. I moved to this State in the spring of 1844, and have been engaged in farming most of the time since. The soil of Illinois is a dark, rich mould, varying from two to six feet in depth, with clay bottom. There is but little sandy

soil in this part of the State. About one-tenth is covered with timber, and that is usually on the borders of our rivers and small streams. Timber land is held at from \$10 to \$50 per acre, according to location and quality.

Our water is usually hard. There are not many springs, owing to the lowness of the land; but water is easily obtained by digging, and usually found in abundance at the depth of from ten to twenty-five feet. There is, in general, a great supply of water for cattle, in our ravines and sloughs.

Stone and brick for cellars are scarce on our prairies, but cement, plastered on a mud wall, answers very well, and makes a neat and dry cellar. Fencing materials are also scarce. Pine lumber and oak posts are now mostly used by the new settlers. This kind of fence can be put up at about 80 to 90 cents per rod; depending, however, somewhat on the distance it has to be hauled. Materials for building are procured in rafts on our rivers, or at Chicago, and taken by team or rail-road to any part of the State.

The breaking of prairie is mostly done in May and June, and generally with ox-teams of four or six yoke—the plough cutting a furrow from sixteen to twenty-two inches wide, and about three inches deep. Of late, however, so many improvements have been made in the form and draught of ploughs, that much of our vast prairie lands can easily be broken with one pair of horses, which can plough from one and a quarter to one and a half acres per day, which is preferable to that done with a large plough. This, every farmer can do with his own team, and cheaper than to hire and pay \$2 50 per acre. I broke fifteen acres last summer, at the rate of one and a half acres per day, with a pair of mares, each having colts, and did it to perfection. The ploughs are made at Moline, in this county, at the rate of one hundred and fifty per week, by J. Drew. They are made of the best German steel, for \$16. A rolling coulter is better. These ploughs are scattered, by rail-roads, all over the State.

Sod corn, if planted in the month of May, and the weather is not too warm, will yield, per acre, from twenty to forty bushels. The planting is done by sticking an axe or a spade between the layers of sod, and, after dropping the corn, apply the *heel of the boot* freely. It needs no culture. If a very light crop of corn is raised, the stalks may be removed and the ground sown with winter wheat. If a heavy crop of corn is raised, it will take too much work to clear the ground of the stalks, and the stumps and roots will be a great hindrance to the harrow,

as the corn roots are strongly set in the sod. As sod corn cannot be relied on with safety, it is, perhaps, better to let the sod lie until September, and then sow with wheat, and harrow thoroughly. This is almost invariably a sure crop, more so than any of the after ones, as the sod holds the roots during our usually dry and snowless winter. Or, the sod may lie till spring, and then be sown with spring wheat, and harrowed only. Let it be cross-ploughed, and we have what no field can be in the Eastern States, with all the manure combined. The soil being a black mould, and very mellow, any thing will grow in it that grows in this latitude. Spring wheat and oats are liable to grow too rank. They should be sown as soon as the frost is out of the ground, that the straw may have a stunted growth. If sown late, say after the first of April, too much straw is grown, which is liable to cause the wheat to blast, smut, &c. We have no summer fallows in this section, having seen none in Illinois. We raise but little winter wheat after the first crop, on the first breaking, until we break up a tame meadow or pasture; then again we have a fine crop. Our usual mode of raising spring wheat, oats and barley, is to sow on the fall ploughing, or on corn ground without ploughing, only harrowing. I raised over twenty-five bushels per acre of the best of wheat last year, on corn ground, without ploughing, and sixty bushels of oats. One team can do the work on a farm of fifty or sixty acres, if all the breaking is done. All stubble land should be ploughed in the fall, and be ready for the small grain in the spring. One man and two horses can easily tend thirty to forty acres of corn, one ploughing for which is sufficient; then mark off both ways, rows about three and a half feet wide, and plant the seed with a machine or a hoe. A man can cover four acres per day; a small boy can drop the seed. Harrow with a three-cornered harrow, by knocking out the forward teeth, so soon as the corn is out of the ground, then use the cultivator or one-horse plough, and work it both ways; twice working after harrowing is sufficient; no hoeing required. A fair yield of winter wheat is about twenty-five bushels per acre; spring wheat, twenty to thirty; oats, forty to seventy-five; barley, twenty to forty; winter rye, twenty to thirty; corn, forty to eighty; potatoes, one hundred to three hundred.

We commence to harvest our corn about the 10th of October. There is more harvested in December than in any other month. Corn can be raised and cribbed at  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents per bushel. Our small grain is all cut by machinery. A machine followed by six binders, cuts and shocks from ten to fifteen acres per day. Price of cutting, 50 to  $62\frac{1}{2}$  cents per acre.



To binders, we pay from \$1 to \$1 25 per day. As it is impossible to house all the grain, it is stacked. Threshing is also done by machinery. This, with cleaning, will cost 5 cents per bushel for wheat; oats, 2½ cents. The straw is usually stacked, to which the cattle have free access during the winter.

Our market is at Chicago or St. Louis. No part of our State is far from rail-road or steamboat shipping, having about 1,800 miles of the former now in good running order, and about 1,000 miles of river navigation.

Our charges correspond with the Eastern market, with the freight charge deducted.

Our soil is well calculated for the production of the tame grasses. Our meadows yield from one and a half to three tons per acre. Ground that has been mown for ten or fifteen years, produces better crops than the new land, because the top soil, which is principally composed of decayed grass and the ashes deposited by annual burnings, is very loose and open. After deep ploughing, and comparatively using up this top soil, we obtain a more compact and fine soil, which will hold the roots of the grass firm and secure. Clover grows luxuriantly, but the trouble is, there is not a sufficient quantity sown to supply the great demand.

There has, until lately, but little attention been paid to the raising of stock. At this present time we can boast of being equal to the other States, in some choice selections of the best stock in the Union. Only a small portion of prairie is yet broken. The cattle roam as upon a "thousand hills" during the summer; but in the winter are fed upon straw, standing corn stalks and prairie hay. Very little corn fodder is cut and cured, being too heavy to handle. Probably nine-tenths of our hay, as yet, is cut upon the prairie, which makes, if well cured, excellent feed. Any quantity of this hay can be cut in any section, yielding from one to three tons per acre. I have fed, for several winters, between sixty and ninety head of cattle upon prairie hay, and have not lost a single one by disease. Our hay is cut by mowing machines, at 50 to 62½ cents per acre. It costs, counting work, board of hands, &c., about one to two dollars per ton in the stack. The feed for a cow, aside from grain, will not exceed \$3 per year. Our pasture is free. Our prairie grass is fully equal to tame grass for butter, cheese, &c., up to the time of frost, which is usually about the 10th of October. The product from my dairy of about thirty-five cows, for the last six years, has been on an average about \$20 per cow, besides the slop for hogs, and



the feed for nearly as many calves. Last year the price of butter in this part of the State was twelve and a half cents per pound; cheese nine to twelve and a half cents. I think these figures will be near the standard for years to come.

In regard to fruit, I would just mention that Whiteside County, Illinois, took the first prize at New-York, last fall. Apple trees, to any amount and of all varieties, can be had in our nurseries from  $12\frac{1}{2}$  to 15 cents apiece. No new or old settler should fail to raise the Osage Orange or Maclura hedge. With proper care, in four years he will have a *living* fence, the entire cost of which will not have exceeded 25 cents per rod. How beautiful will our State appear, in a few more years, with our farms surrounded by this evergreen shrub. There is no State in the Union that can support so large a population as Illinois. Now not more than one-twelfth part of the surface is under cultivation. There is scarcely an acre that can be called *waste ground*. We have no mountains nor rocks; no stumps to grub out; no stones to pick off, and seldom a snow bank to wallow through. I believe if this State was cultivated as New-York or Massachusetts, it would *feed* the Union. The population is about 1,000,000. A grant of one thirty-sixth part of land is set apart by Congress for public schools. Our State debt will all be paid in a few years by the internal resources, without the increase of taxation. This debt has been a bug-bear to some of our Eastern friends, declining to locate with us, for fear of being obliged to help pay it. This objection is now removed. Why the Eastern emigrants seek a home in Nebraska, Minnesota or even in Iowa, is strange to my mind. Illinois has all the advantages that any reasonable man could desire. Our rail-roads are now so connected that we have access to any part of the Union, and the Eastern market is brought to our very doors.

For the information of some who are desirous to know more definite particulars, I will here add the course pursued by my first neighbor, William Waite, in starting his prairie farm. In the spring of 1853 he bought eighty acres of prairie, for \$4 50 per acre, making

Whole value of the entire farm to be only . . .	\$360
Broke 60 acres, at \$2 50 per acre, . . . . .	150
Fenced 60 acres, \$1 per rod, 400 rods of board fence, . . . . .	400
Sowed 40 acres with winter wheat, $1\frac{1}{2}$ bushels to the acre, at \$1 per bushel, . . . . .	60
Sowing and harrowing, 75 cents per acre, . . . .	30

Harvesting and marketing, \$1 50 per acre, . . .	60	
Threshing and cleaning 1,100 bushels, at 10 cents per bushel, . . . . .	110	
Hauling 15 miles to rail-road, 6 cents per bushel, . . .	66	\$1,236

Planted twenty acres with corn :

Ploughing 20 acres in the spring, at 75 cents, . . .	\$15	
Marking off and planting, . . . . .	15	
Cultivating, at \$1 25 per acre, . . . . .	25	
Harvesting, at \$1 per acre, . . . . .	20	
Threshing and hauling 15 miles to rail-road, 1,000 bushels, at 10 cents per bushel, . . . . .	100	\$175

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Total cost of farm and crops, . . . . .	\$1,411
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1,100 bushels of wheat, at \$1 15 per bushel, . . .	\$1,265	
1,000 bushels of corn, at 28 cents per bushel, . . .	280	
Total amount of crops, . . . . .	\$1,545	

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Profits of 60 acres, after paying all expenses, &c., . . . \$134  
and 20 acres of land unbroken. This farm is now worth \$25 per acre.

Respectfully yours,

C. G. TAYLOR.

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LETTER FROM W. H. MUNN, ESQ., MARSHALL CO., ILL.

Hon. JOHN WILSON :

Dear Sir,—Yours of the 2d instant, containing many important questions relative to what an industrious farmer can do on the prairies of Illinois, has been received, and though I am very busy at this time grafting, I will not delay giving you a brief reply.

You ask me to state my own case, but I wish to be excused, for I have devoted the most of my time and attention to the cultivation of the Maclura hedge plant, ever since I have been a resident of the State.

An industrious man, who has but a small capital (\$200 to \$400) to commence with, can soon have a farm, of one hundred and sixty acres, in a good state of cultivation, provided he has health, and is a good economist.

In the first place he must put up a shanty of some kind to live in; then some kind of a cheap fence that will turn cattle and horses, (these being the only stock permitted to run at large,) for four or five years, and by that time he can have a good living fence that will turn all kinds of stock, and be as durable almost as the land upon which it stands.

About the 1st of May is the time to commence breaking prairie. A good pair of horses will turn from one and a half to two acres per day.

What is not planted in corn should be sown in fall wheat, and will generally turn off about twenty bushels per acre. New land is the best for wheat, and the third crop is considered the best for corn.

Prairie breaking is worth from \$2 to \$2 25 per acre. Good hands demand here, for the last two years, from \$175 to \$200 per annum.

After the first year's crop, we get from ten to twenty bushels of wheat per acre, and from thirty to fifty of corn. An industrious man can manage eighty acres, by having a little help in seed time and harvest. The prairie grass makes excellent hay for cattle and horses. It is somewhat difficult to sell the crop in the field, as every man has as much of his own raising to harvest as he can get done in good time.

I have travelled considerably, but I know of no other State that affords to the farmer so many conveniences as this one. It costs but little to make a farm, and when it is made it is a good one—one that, with proper management, will always yield a good crop, which, delivered at some rail-road station, will always bring a good price. Improvements pay well, should you wish to sell the farm.

The above was written in great haste, and the half is not told. You may use it if you think it will be of any service to you or any one.

Yours, very respectfully,

W. H. MUNN.

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### ILLINOIS THROUGH MASSACHUSETTS SPECTACLES.

PERMIT me, as a Massachusetts farmer, under the above heading, to give a faint glimpse of some matters and things in the Prairie State—as seen through my glasses.

Every farmer knows well the benefit of crossing his stock, and it may be that ideas improve under a similar law; at the worst, I shall be safe, as there is no possible danger for me to lose by the cross, but have every chance to gain.

It will not do for the New-England man to come here and carry out



all of his notions of economy; his ideas will be altogether too contracted; he only knows of farming upon a limited scale, and "under difficulties." In this State, nature has done much for the husbandman, and his system of agriculture must be as broad and comprehensive as the prairies themselves. In New-England, there is more calculation, more order, more method, more finish; the soil being so sterile the people have been necessitated to learn these sterling qualities. In this State, I am sorry to say, they seem but little practiced; but there is no spot on the globe where it would pay better. It is true the land fever has raged extensively among your farmers, and they have invested every spare dollar in increasing the number of their acres, instead of building houses and barns, and purchasing farming utensils, and giving their homes an air of comfort; and it has proved to be a good investment; but there are very many who have secured the number of acres to satisfy them, who have all kinds of stock in abundance, and money besides, who do not live and enjoy the comforts of home and social life in so high a degree as the mechanic in New-England, who supports himself and family upon one dollar and a half per day. This class of farmers have, no doubt, generally commenced poor, and struggled with all the disadvantages of a border life, until the introduction of rail-roads into the State, when they availed themselves of the benefits, and found fortunes in the sudden rise in the value of their estates, but have no desire, further, to improve their condition.

So far as health is concerned, time will prove that the prairies of the West will compare well with any of the Eastern States. Eastern people have made a big bug-bear out of the miasma of the prairies; but if they will turn their attention to the thousands of alder swamps between their hills, where the sun and wind are almost strangers, they will discover more causes of ill-health concentrated there in a few acres, than is scattered over a whole prairie, where the purifying influences of the sun and wind have full scope. This season has been an unusually unhealthy one for this State; but during the most sickly time; I was wandering over the prairies, and I saw but few instances where the ill-health could not be directly traced to infringements of physical laws, either through ignorance or necessity. In some cases of chills and fever that have come under my observation, a few outward applications of soap and water no doubt would have relieved the patient. Then, again, if the pioneers would eat less pork, and more fruit and vegetables, it would be much better for them; and I only wonder, all things considered, that there is *so much* health here, the people are such big sinners in a physi-

cal point of view. Pure water is an important item in the bill of health, though it is but little attended to. People all over the prairies drink surface water, when with digging or boring, pure water can be had, or what might be still better for family use, cisterns can be sunk in the earth at a trifling expense, to save all of the rain water from buildings. When the new settlers get the conveniences of life around them, the prairies will be regarded as more healthy than the Eastern States. The fevers of the West will never be a match for the consumption of the East.

Now to farming. At the East, large stories are in circulation about the productiveness of Illinois, and I am happy to say that I have seen with my own eyes crops of various kinds upon the soil which, if I should report them at the East, I should not be believed, though I have a decent reputation for truth there. For this fruitfulness, nature should receive all the thanks, the farmer none. Though blessed with the most productive soil, it is improved but poorly. At most, not one cultivator in ten can lay any claim to the name of farmer; though it is true that circumstances have been very much against the development of the agricultural interest of this State, until the opening of the rail-roads. Now, farming has received such an impetus that it will soon come up to the standard it is destined to reach; but so fertile is the soil, the extent of its capacity to produce is unlimited. Corn and wheat are the crops farmers mostly rely upon; but barley, rye, beans, potatoes, onions, flax, and fruits of all kinds adapted to the State, in addition, will pay equally as well, and for a number of years, even better. In fact, the farmer cannot turn his attention to stock raising or the cultivation of any crop, if he is a practical man and has any energy, without realizing a fortune, and, too, at prices far below the present. As an act of humanity and for the saving of thousands of tons of beef and pork, he should provide temporary sheds, if nothing more, for the protection of his flocks and herds. The cold winds on the prairies are as hard for cattle to bear, and they need as much shelter in the winter as in Massachusetts; and persons there, not providing shelter for their cattle, would be indicted for cruelty to dumb beasts. If beasts are exposed, the natural heat of the animal must be kept up with extra feed, or at the expense of the animal; and the consequent result is, that in the spring, most of the cattle here are poor, and then it takes half the following summer to get them up again.

After spending a few months in travelling over this State, and seeing for myself, I have made an estimate of the production, or rather the

amount of produce a good farmer can sell from a section of land, after provisioning his family and assistants, and feeding the necessary teams to be employed upon a grain farm, taking the prairie in the wild state, and for the first years, commencing moderately, by ploughing one-third the first, two-thirds the second, and the whole the third, fourth and fifth years; and I think that fifty thousand dollars can be realized, as the total receipts for the five years term. This estimate is for a grain farm, which should be located in the neighborhood of a depot. During these five years fruit trees and other improvements should be going on, to keep up with the age. The double plough should be used in breaking the sod, so that as good a crop can be had the first as succeeding years. From what I know of farming in New-England, I should much rather prefer land in this State, if I could get it upon a long credit, so as to put my capital into improvements, than to accept of one-half of the farms there with a free title to commence with. Practice the same energy and industry as would be necessary there, and a young man can earn his farm here, and be wealthier in ten years, than he could to have a farm presented him in New-England to start with. One word about wood land and my long yarn shall break. Eastern men, on first coming into this State, sigh for more wood land, but they soon learn that there is coal enough below its surface to warm up the hearts and bodies of all of Uncle Sam's family, besides generating steam enough to drive all the engines in creation to all eternity.

Then, again, in twenty years from this time, there will be twenty times as much forest as at present; for as soon as the prairie fires are stopped, timber starts up; and trees every intelligent farmer is now planting, just where he wants them, to beautify and adorn his lands. Fencing material will be mostly supplied by hedging, which will also tend to make this State what nature has designed it to be—the Eden of America.

*Pera Station, Dec. 29th, 1855.*

*On Chicago Branch of Illinois C. R. R.*

L. G. CHASE.

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#### LETTER FROM DANIEL ARTER.

VILLA RIDGE, ILL., Jan. 25, 1856.

Hon. JOHN WILSON,

*Land Commissioner:*

Dear Sir,—Understanding that you are desirous of obtaining information concerning the agricultural capabilities, general features, &c.,



of the southern, as well as other portions of Illinois, I cheerfully offer the following facts.

For upwards of twenty years, I have been a permanent resident of the southern part of the State, located opposite Section 12 of the Illinois Central Rail-Road, (12 miles from Cairo,) and three-quarters of a mile from said road, in a westerly direction. During that period my attention has been mainly devoted to agriculture, and the practice of medicine—the pursuit of which calling will enable me to bear valuable testimony, perhaps, in behalf of, at least, the locality wherein I operated.

The land I have cultivated has proven itself well adapted to the raising of quite every kind of grain, fruits, vegetables, &c., which an agreeable medium of climate allows.

The average yield of my farm, which is mainly hill land, not abruptly broken, however, and which (I can safely add) is the general character of the county (Pulaski) wherein I reside, has been about as follows :

Corn, 40 to 45 bushels per acre.

Wheat, 20                   “                   “

Potatoes, 250               “               “

whilst oats, barley, rye, buckwheat, &c., grow in just proportion.

Of fruits, I have ever had an abundant yield ; peaches, plums, quinces, cherries and pears being cultivated with remarkable success, so far as experiments have been made, whilst the culture of apples has never failed to reward abundantly all labor and expense bestowed.

Vegetables, of almost every character, quite every description of grape and berry, grow astonishingly ; although little attention is now being paid to their cultivation. Much of the land is peculiarly adapted to the cultivation of the grape ; and nowhere do I know of a locality more fitly situated for an extensive gardening interest than that in question. Its situation is but a few miles from Cairo—a market rarely, if ever, overstocked with vegetables, owing to the great river demand—and sufficiently distant south from Chicago to enable the producer to ripen certain garden products a few weeks after the seeds of similar products begin to germinate so far north.

The climate is happily exempt from all remarkable extremes. The country is abundantly supplied with never-failing springs of pure, cold water ; is well timbered ; generally provided with every necessary the wants of the settler demand, and bears a reputation for *health* among those familiar with the locality, which alone should render it a desirable place of residence, were every other feature less encouraging than here truthfully represented.

I am, sir, your obt. servt.,

DANIEL ARTER.

## LETTER FROM H. H. HENDRICK.

BATAVIA, KANE Co., ILL., *Feb.* 21, 1855.

Hon. JOHN WILSON :

Dear Sir,—Your letter and circular of February 2d was received a few days since. Owing, I suppose, to the obstructions of the rail-roads by the snow, and further, as I have changed my place of residence, and purchased a small place near Batavia, your letter was first sent to Northville, and then back to Batavia, which retarded it still longer. But I will now endeavor to answer your questions, from my own experience, as well as I can.

When I first came to Illinois, in November, 1835, I had but small means to commence with in a new country. The next spring I went eighteen miles north of Chicago, and purchased a claim (as it was then called) of one hundred and sixty acres, and commenced improvements. I practiced surveying to some extent, which enabled me to purchase necessities, till I could procure them from my own soil. After staying there six years, not liking that portion of the country very well, I sold out, and purchased upwards of two hundred acres on the west side of Fox River, twenty miles above Ottawa, for which I paid a little less than \$2 50 per acre. I then commenced improving it; and as my means were still very limited, I was obliged to proceed with caution. However, I got up a house, fenced and broke up seventy acres in two seasons, with very little help. My plough cut about twenty or twenty-two inches, and I broke about two acres per day, with four yoke of cattle, the sod being very tough. I sometimes put on five yoke. I then sowed twenty acres with winter wheat, on ground from which one crop had been taken, and twenty acres of spring wheat, on new prairie, after the ground had been ploughed again in the spring. The whole was good, and yielded twenty bushels per acre, of the first quality. But, as wheat was then, and for several years afterwards, very low, and we had to transport it a long distance to market with teams, it little more than paid the expense of raising, &c. One year I had twenty-five bushels of wheat on ground from which one crop of corn had been taken; and had the weather been not quite so hot a few days before harvest, I think it would have yielded thirty bushels. My average crops have been from fifteen to twenty-two bushels per acre; one year, and only one, I had but thirteen and one-half bushels.

The best way, I think, to raise winter wheat on new prairie, is to

break it in June very shallow, and cross-plough it a little deeper than it was broke, about the end of August; then sow and harrow it well, and leave it as rough as you can. If among corn, sow about the last of August or first of September, and put in with a double shovel plough, by going twice in a row. Stock must not be allowed to run on it, unless the ground is covered with snow. The stalks must be cut or broken down in the spring. To break them down, I take a pole, ten or twelve feet in length, and hitch a team to it so as to draw it sideways, when the snow is off, and the ground and stalks frozen, and break three rows at once. One man and team will break thirty acres in a day. I roll all my small grain in the spring, and think it grows evener, and I know it is better harvesting. Wheat does well on the sod, if put in as I describe, often yielding twenty bushels or more per acre. Corn, on sod, is rather precarious. I have never tried it to any extent, but some have raised twenty or thirty bushels per acre.

My method of raising corn is to plough the ground deep, then mark it one way with my single shovel plough, about five inches deep and about four feet apart each way; (any thing that will make a mark will do for one way;) the corn is then dropped four kernels in a hill. I then take my two-shovel plough, and set the shovels apart, so as to drive the horse in the furrow, and turn the dirt from each side on the corn. This plan I find is very beneficial in wet weather, in carrying the surplus water off the hills. Just as it comes up, I take my harrow, and knock the centre teeth back so as not to drag up the corn; I then take my team and drive with one horse on each side of the row, taking one row at a time, and harrow it all over. This leaves the ground in fine condition. After a few days, I take my two-shovel plough, and go through it twice in a row, both ways; and if I have time, I go through it three times. This leaves the ground in fine order, and the corn, I think, fills out much better. I have grown corn with stalks upwards of nine feet in length, and ears thirteen inches in length, and nine and a half inches in circumference; but these were extraordinary specimens, having grown where some straw had been burned the fall before. My corn is a larger kind than most of that grown throughout the country, and yields from fifty to seventy or eighty bushels per acre. The time for planting is from the first to the middle of May, or even earlier. One man can tend forty acres, provided he can have help to go through with it with the plough the first time.

I have raised fifty bushels of oats per acre, and nearly two hundred bushels of potatoes; but they are not so sure. I find by experience



that they do best planted about the middle of May, that they may be well advanced by the time the hot weather comes on; or not till after the middle of June, that they may have the benefit of the September rains. But last season, late planted potatoes with us, were almost an entire failure. I find, by experience, that crops of all kinds do best put in early.

For grazing, I think our lands may be ranked among the best, if rightly managed. The dry land, stock down with red clover, or timothy and clover; and the wet portions, with red top. Clover does extremely well, and yields an abundant supply of feed. Timothy does better after the land has been cultivated for a short time. A slight dressing of manure, to change the nature of the soil, is a great help to it. Selling crops on the ground is not much practiced; but, as a general rule, I believe, about twice the freight from the station to Chicago may be considered the difference in the price of produce at the station. Help last season was scarce, and wages very high; varying from \$14 to \$18 per month, for seven or eight months together. The increase in value per acre would depend much on the size of the tract cultivated. A small farm would be worth more per acre, with the same improvements, than a very large one. For example, take 160 acres, purchased at \$10 per acre:

First cost on 160 acres, at \$10 per acre, . . . . .	\$1,600 00
Breaking one hundred acres, at \$2 25, . . . . .	225 00
160 rods fence, on front side or road, \$1 per rod, . . . . .	160 00
Half of the other three sides, . . . . .	240 00
Building house, &c., . . . . .	500 00
Fruit trees, &c., . . . . .	25 00

Amounting to . . . . . \$2,750 00

It is probably now worth \$25 per acre, which will be . . . . .	\$4,000 00
Leaving a profit for owner of . . . . .	1,250 00
Or, at \$20 per acre, still leaves a balance of . . . . .	450 00

It is probable that the fence may be built for a little less than one dollar per rod; but as I have made no allowance for cross-fences, yards, &c., and calculated only half of three sides, and one whole side for the road, I think the excess of price will not more than pay the expense of building the necessary fences inside. I have also left sixty acres for meadow and pasture. If the purchaser have means to make the necessary improvements, or most of them, I think he would do well to settle on such lands.

From my own experience, I think the statements of Mr. Wight, editor of the "Prairie Farmer," are as correct as can well be calculated. Spring wheat is rated a little below. But I have not paid extra attention to the growing of oats, and not much to wheat. A great portion of the lands through which the Illinois Central Rail-Road passes I have not seen; but judging from what I have, and the descriptions of those who are considered good judges, I should pronounce it an excellent tract. I will now state my reasons for selling out where I was. Not having any help of my own, I was obliged to do all myself, or hire, and to get good hands was often difficult and expensive. I therefore concluded to sell, which I did, for \$30 per acre, (200 acres,) as I stated, and live a little easier. I have in another place there yet, seventeen and a half acres, and of an island seven and a half, both of which I have offers for, and think I shall sell them.

Yours, respectfully,

H. H. HENDRICK.

LETTER FROM W. R. HARRIS.

PALMYRA, LEE CO., ILL., *Feb. 17, 1853?*

Hon. JOHN WILSON:

Sir,—In reply to your inquiries in regard to Illinois farming, I will state that I commenced here in the spring of 1847, with a capital of \$700, with which I purchased twenty acres of timber and one hundred and sixty acres of prairie land. The first season, I broke up fifty-five acres, with a pair of horses and one yoke of oxen; breaking two acres per day. The third year, I added eighty acres to my farm, and hired fifty acres broke, at \$2 per acre. The fourth year, I hired ten acres more broke, at \$2 25 per acre, which gave me one hundred and fifteen acres under cultivation. This is all that I have had under cultivation, and I have sold the product this year for over \$2,000. I have now been engaged here about eight years, and my capital of \$700 has increased to between \$8,000 and \$10,000.

We generally plant corn from the first to the twenty-fifth of May. The usual crop of sod corn will about pay for breaking, and the cost of raising. It will hardly come off in time for sowing fall wheat, but the ground will be in good order for sowing spring wheat, which will probably yield from twenty-five to thirty bushels per acre. After the first season, the average crop of corn is sixty bushels (shelled) per acre. One man, with a pair of horses, will tend forty acres of corn, and do

it well. Our grain sells at the rail-road stations, at about ten cents per sixty lbs. below the Chicago prices. The prairies are first rate grass lands, and well adapted to the raising of all kinds of stock. Wages vary from \$15 to \$20 per month.

Yours, &c.,

W. R. HARRIS.

### LETTER FROM JOSEPH C. ORTH.

MCCLEARY'S BLUFF, WABASH Co., ILL., }  
December 16, 1855. }

Hon. JOHN WILSON,

*Land Commissioner :*

Dear Sir,—I have been a resident of this county for the past twelve years, having emigrated from Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, and have devoted a large portion of the time since to agricultural pursuits. From close observations during this period, I have become pretty thoroughly acquainted with Southern Illinois, and its relative advantages and disadvantages as compared with the northern part of the State. The soil upon the upland is not so rich in appearance as that in the northern prairies, being a grayish, calcareous clay, with an admixture of vegetable mould ; but produces, with proper cultivation, very heavy crops of corn, often equal to those raised on the black alluvial soil skirting the streams. It is peculiarly adapted to the smaller grains, such as wheat, oats, barley, rye, and also the various meadow grasses. The culture of wheat has been of comparatively recent introduction into this section of the State ; and such has been the remarkable success of the experiment, that it is destined to become one of the principal staples of Southern Illinois. The average crops of Pennsylvania farmers, who have here turned their attention to its growth, have been about 23 bushels per acre, of winter wheat. The grain is plump and heavy, often weighing as high as 66 lbs. to the bushel. In the fall of 1853, the premium priced wheat received at the St. Louis market was shipped from this section of the State. The variety principally grown is the white or blue-stem ; though the red varieties are equally sure and productive. An experienced Pennsylvania farmer, Mr. George Glick, who has resided here some years, last season travelled through Illinois, from here to Galena, and was led, from motives of curiosity, to examine the



specimens of wheat in the stacks, granaries and mills along his route. He came back fully satisfied that the best region in Illinois for raising winter wheat is south of the National road. The berry is larger and heavier, and the plant not so likely to freeze out as on the extreme northern prairies, where the winter winds blow off the light porous soil from about the roots. The high character of Southern Illinois wheat is still more clearly demonstrated by the fact, that the specimens of wheat from Union, one of the southernmost counties, bore off the premium at the last State Fair at Chicago.

Among the grasses, timothy and blue grass thrive well, and clover is particularly a sure crop, yielding two tons of hay and two bushels of seed per acre. I know from experience that our gray upland soil may be annually enriched by a proper rotation of crops, and by occasionally seeding down in clover. It is unnecessary to say any thing of the general productive capacity of this region, so far as Indian corn is concerned. Even with the careless cultivation usually bestowed upon it, the yield is equal to that of any portion of the Mississippi valley. A peculiar feature of Southern Illinois is, that the timber land and prairie alternate in tracts of convenient size, and the surface is more undulating, as a general thing, than in the north part of the State, thus affording facilities for convenient drainage.

For stock raising, this region offers great advantages, as the winters are comparatively mild and short, and domestic animals consequently require less food, and can be raised with less expense than in a higher latitude.

As to health, I candidly believe Southern Illinois will compare favorably with any portion of the West. That scourge of the North, consumption, is almost unknown here. It is true, that on the rich lowlands bordering the streams, bilious disorders prevail to some extent in the fall season, but on the uplands, good health may be enjoyed, with ordinary prudence. Diseases, the result of miasma, prevail in every new country south of the 44th parallel of latitude, when the virgin soil is first turned over and exposed to the atmosphere. It was so in the Genesee valley, in New-York, and in the valley of the Miami, in Ohio, and has been so in Illinois; but the country becomes more healthful as it grows older. A great deal of ague and chills is attributable to errors in diet, to imprudent exposure, to uncomfortable dwelling-houses and to using well-water where it leaches through the soil, instead of flowing through veins in the rock. By occupying comfortable tenements, avoiding needless exposure, eating suitable food, and using only sweet, pure

water for drinking and culinary purposes, as good health may be enjoyed in Southern Illinois as anywhere in the Union.

An unjust prejudice has hitherto prevailed against this section of the State. None of the great avenues of travel have, until recently, passed through it. It looks uninviting and sterile to those who only view it from the steamers as they sweep around its borders on the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. Immense tracts of its fertile woodland and prairies were, until recently, in the hands of *squatters*, who had held it for years as public land, thus avoiding paying Government for the land, and taxes to the State. They purposely discouraged all those who wished to settle among them, and gave currency to all manner of evil reports concerning the country, to prevent strangers from entering them out at the United States land offices. This class are, however, fast leaving, and giving place to better citizens.

These causes, and others which might be enumerated, have conspired to keep Southern Illinois in the back ground; but through the influence of the rail-roads that are now penetrating it, its intrinsic advantages must soon become known; and the inducements it offers in soil, climate and convenience, either to the New-Orleans, St. Louis or Chicago markets, will gradually become appreciated by the sagacious and enterprising emigrant farmer.

Very respectfully, yours,

JOSEPH C. ORTH.

## LETTER FROM J. AMBROSE WIGHT, ESQ.,

EDITOR OF THE PRAIRIE FARMER.

Hon. JOHN WILSON:

Dear Sir,—At your request I would state that, from an acquaintance with Illinois lands and Illinois farmers, of eighteen years, thirteen of which I have been engaged as editor of the *Prairie Farmer*, I am prepared to give the following as the rates of produce which may be had per acre, with ordinary culture:

Winter wheat,	. . . . .	15 to 25 bushels.
Spring wheat,	. . . . .	10 to 20 "
Indian corn,	. . . . .	40 to 70 "
Oats,	. . . . .	40 to 80 "
Potatoes,	. . . . .	100 to 200 "
Grass, (timothy and clover,)	. . . . .	1½ to 3 tons.

"*Ordinary culture*," on prairie lands, is not what is meant by the term in the Eastern or Middle States. It means, here, no manure; and commonly *but once*, or, at most, twice ploughing, on perfectly smooth land, with long furrows, and no stones or obstructions; when two acres per day is no hard job for one team. It is often but very poor culture, with shallow ploughing, and without attention to weeds.

I have known crops, not unfrequently, far greater than these, with but little variation in their treatment; say forty to fifty bushels of winter wheat, sixty to eighty of oats, three hundred of potatoes, and one hundred of Indian corn. "*Good culture*," which means rotation, deep ploughing, farms well stocked, and some manure, applied at intervals of from three to five years, would, in good seasons, very often approach these latter figures.

Yours, truly,

J. AMBROSE WIGHT.

January 9, 1855.

#### EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM H. BRADLEY, OF ROCKTON, ILLINOIS.

"I plough the ground very deep, then mark it two feet each way; then proceed to plant with a hand-planter, two rows at a time. Within five or six days, (just before the corn comes out of the ground,) brush the ground over with a light drag with short wooden teeth, thus displacing the weeds on the surface, and leaving it as smooth as an onion bed. Within a fortnight after the corn gets up, go through it once in a row each way with a corn plough, and the work of cultivation is done. Now is not this comparatively a cheap way of raising corn? I shall have at least sixty bushels per acre *this dry season*, besides having double the usual amount of fodder. \* \* \* One man will plant as fast with the machine as four will with hoes, and do the work much better than can be done with the hoe, as the machine is so nicely adjusted as to drop from three to five kernels, pricking them all within the space of an inch and a half square, thus giving a much better chance to run the plough close to the hill, than if the hill occupied from four to six inches square, as it does planted with a hoe."



The *Illinois State Register* gives an account of a crop of corn grown by J. N. BROWN, Esq., of Sangamon County. His address is Berlin Post-office.

"Mr. Brown broke up a field of forty acres, which had been in grass eighteen years, and planted it in corn. The corn might have been put in hills a little thicker than usual, and the after culture was tolerably thorough. Some three or four weeks ago, nine acres of the land was measured off, being the poorest part of the field, and the corn gathered and husked, when it was found that the nine acres averaged ninety-five bushels an acre, which was satisfactory evidence (the poorest part of the field having been measured) that the whole forty acres would average full *one hundred bushels* to the acre.

"This incident is mentioned as an evidence that the soil of Central Illinois does not deteriorate. Mr. Brown is of opinion, that by a proper rotation of crops, our soil will improve, and be made to produce richer yields than it does even now. \* \* \* \* \*

"In a conversation we had with Mr. Brown, he assured us that the land had never been manured, and that if it had received as much attention as is usual in the other States, the crop would have been much larger."

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*Extract from the Chicago "Daily Democratic Press."*

#### ILLINOIS FARMS AND FARMERS.

We find a letter in the *Hunterton Gazette*, New-Jersey, from a prominent citizen of that section, who has been out West prospecting, with a view of locating among us. Speaking of farms and farmers in Illinois, he says:

Let me cite a few facts which I know to be true, however large they may seem to be. Mr. Peter C. Rea, who resided twelve years in Raritan, near Clover Hill, and emigrated to Illinois, Fulton County, in the early part of this year, told me he had raised and sold more wheat since he had been there, than he had done in twelve years he had resided in Raritan. He simply raked together and burned the cornstalks in the spring, and without ploughing the ground, sowed it with spring wheat

and harrowed it in, and in a few months reaped a fine crop of spring wheat. He has besides on his farm, a good prospect for a crop of winter wheat. I ate at his house some bread made of the flour from his spring wheat, and it was as white and as good as any I ever ate in New-Jersey. He also told me he should probably make as much money this year in Illinois, as he did in twelve years in New-Jersey.

I saw a farmer in Peoria County, who lived on a rented farm of eighty acres, for which he paid \$200 rent for the land, and \$26 for the house; he did all his work himself, except some help in planting corn; had one team of horses, and after paying his rent, and supporting his family, would clear one thousand dollars this year.

My friend, Mr. D. H. L. Sutphin, of Pike County, formerly of this county, had a field in with wheat, and harvested therefrom upwards of 3,000 bushels. He hired every thing done, and if I remember correctly, had cleared over and above all expenses, about \$2,000 by this operation. He introduced me to a gentleman by the name of Simpkins, in that county, who came there a few years ago, with nothing save his health and his hands. He was now farming, and he told us that he would sell this year produce from his farm amounting to between \$17,000 and \$18,000. I saw his hog-pen, containing 481 fat hogs, which would average 350 lbs. each.

I am fearful that if I give you any larger facts than these, they may be doubted; but one more before I close. I was in Morgan County, and near Jacksonville was the farm of Mr. Funk, and I was told from a reliable source, that he sold that year \$60,000 worth of cattle from off his farm. I know instances where men have done even better than this, the past year, but it is needless to relate more particulars. If it would be proper, I could give you the names of men from this county, who were poor men when here, and probably would always have been poor men if they had remained here, who are now owning farms in Illinois, in some instances upwards of 300 acres, and getting rich fast. My opinion is, that there never was a more favorable time for emigrating to Illinois than the present. True, lands are greatly enhanced in value; but prices of grain are yearly approximating New-York prices, and the good prairie land is better worth \$100 per acre than our best New-Jersey is worth \$50.

## LETTER FROM JOHN S. PEIRONNEL.

PERU, ILLINOIS, *January 1, 1856.*

HON. JOHN WILSON, Chicago :

Dear Sir,—According to your request, I send you a statement of the corn I raised on a ten-acre lot you had formerly sold the Rev. William Uhl, (less half acre for road,) which I bought last April for thirty dollars per acre, (\$300,) which I thought, at the time, a high price. Since then I have bought 90 acres more, at much higher rates, and am sorry I cannot buy more. I have formerly lived in Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, for thirty-three years, and had a farm there, which I sold when coming West, two years since, for \$41 25 per acre. Now, sir, I candidly say, I get more corn off the ten acres I give you a description of, than can be raised off said farm in Pennsylvania, 60 acres. The nature of the prairie land is such, that ten acres can be cultivated easier than one in Pennsylvania. I market more grain this season than the whole township I came from in Pennsylvania, (Choconut;) and I candidly say, if my old neighbors and friends knew the beauty of this vast Western country, Susquehanna County would again become a wilderness.

I am, dear sir, your obt. servt.,

JNO. S. PEIRONNEL.

## STATEMENT

*Of the Expenditures, Receipts and Profits of the Farm of Wm. P. West, of Batavia, for 1853.*

## EDS. PRAIRIE FARMER :

In compliance with the request of Mr. THOS. JUDD, one of the committee on farming, I submit the following in relation to the cost of raising the various crops, viz.:

*Twenty-three Acres.*

1852.		Dr.
June.	To breaking twenty-three acres, 3 inches deep, at \$1 50 per acre, .....	\$34 50
Aug.	To 8 days' cross-ploughing, 4 inches deep, at \$2, .....	16 00
Sept. 1.	To 46 bushels Soule's seed wheat, at 75 c. per bushel, ..	34 50
do.	To 2 days' work, sowing the same, at \$1, .....	2 00
do.	To 6 days' work, harrowing, at \$2 per day, .....	12 00
do.	To cost harvesting 23 acres, at \$1 50 per acre, .....	34 50
do.	To threshing 690 bushels, at 8 c. per bushel, .....	55 20
do.	To hauling the same to market, at 2 c., .....	13 80
		<hr/> \$202 50 <hr/>



1852.	Cr.
By 30 bushels per acre, 690 bushels, at 95 c.,.....	\$655 50
Cost, .....	202 50
Nett profits,.....	\$453 00
Cost per acre,.....	\$8 80
Nett profits per acre,.....	19 70

*Seventeen and a half Acres Wheat on Corn Ground.*

1852.	Dr.
Aug. 20. To sowing 1½ days, at \$1 per day, .....	\$1 50
do. To 35 bushels Soule's seed wheat, at 75 c.,.....	26 25
do. To 4 days' work, man, horse and shovel-plough, at \$1 50,	6 00
do. To 2 days' work, man, horse and small harrow, at \$1 50,	3 00
do. To 6 days' work, hoeing in wheat around hills,.....	6 00
do. Cost harvesting 17½ acres, at \$1 50 per acre,.....	26 25
do. To threshing 394 bushels, at 8 c. per bushel,.....	31 52
do. To carting 214 bushels to market, at 2 c. per bushel,....	4 28
Total cost,.....	\$104 80

1852.	Cr.
By 22½ bushels per acre, ..... 394 bushels.	
214 bushels, sold at 95 c. per bushel,.....	\$203 30
180 bushels, sold at farm, at \$1 per bushel,.....	180 00
	\$383 30
Cost,.....	104 80
Nett profits, 17½ acres,.....	\$278 50
Cost per acre,.....	\$5 93
Net profits per acre,.....	15 91

*Twelve Acres of Oats.*

1853.	Dr.
April 15. To 5 days' ploughing, at \$2, .....	\$10 00
do. To 4 days' harrowing, at \$2,.....	8 00
do. To 36 bushels oats for seed, and 1 day's work at \$1,....	10 00
do. To threshing, \$42, harvesting, \$18,.....	60 00
Total, .....	\$88 00

1853.	Cr.
By 87½ bushels per acre, making 1,050 bushels, at 25 c.,.....	\$262 50
Cost, .....	88 00
Nett profits,.....	\$174 50
Cost per acre,.....	\$7 33
Nett profits per acre,.....	14 54

*Nine and a half Acres of Spring Wheat.*

1852.	Dr.
Sept. To 5 days' ploughing, 8 inches deep, at \$2, .....	\$10 00
do. To 19 bushels Rio seed wheat, at 75 c., .....	14 25
1853.	
March 25. 1 day's sowing the same, .....	\$1 00
3 days' work, harrowing, at \$2, .....	6 00
Cost harvesting 9½ acres, at \$1 50 per acre, .....	14 25
Cost threshing 228 bushels, at 8 c., .....	18 24
To carting the same to market, at 2 c., .....	4 56
Total cost, .....	<u>\$68 30</u>
1853.	Cr.
By 9½ acres, 24 bushels per acre, 228 bushels, at \$1, .....	\$228 00
Cost, .....	<u>68 30</u>
Nett profits, .....	\$159 70
Cost per acre, .....	\$7 20
Nett profits per acre, .....	16 81

*Two and a quarter Acres of Winter Rye.*

1852.	Dr.
Sept. To ploughing 1 day, \$2, .....	\$2 00
To 4 bushels seed, 50 c., .....	2 00
To sowing and harrowing, one day, .....	2 00
To harvesting the same, .....	3 75
To threshing 50 bushels Rye, at 8 c., .....	4 00
To carting the same to market, at 2 c., .....	1 00
Total cost, .....	<u>\$14 75</u>
1852.	Cr.
By 2¼ acres, 22 bushels and 7 qts. per acre, 50 bushels, at 50 c., ...	\$25 00
Cost, .....	<u>14 75</u>
Nett profits, .....	\$10 25
Cost per acre, .....	\$6 56
Nett profits per acre, .....	4 55

*Five and a half Acres of Barley.*

1853.	Dr.
April. To 2½ days' ploughing, at \$2, .....	\$5 00
To 12 bushels seed, at 40 c., .....	4 80
To 1 day's work, sowing same, .....	1 00
To 1½ days' work, harrowing, \$2, .....	3 00
To harvesting 5½ acres, at \$1 50, .....	8 25
To carting 182 bushels to market, at 2 c., .....	3 64
Threshing the same, at 8 c., .....	14 56
Total cost, .....	<u>\$40 25</u>

1853.	Cr.
By 5½ acres, 33 bushels 3 qts. per acre, 182 bushels, at 40 c.,.....	\$72 80
Cost, .....	40 25
Nett profits, .....	\$32 55
Cost per acre,.....	\$7 32
Nett profits per acre,.....	5 92

*Twenty-eight and a half Acres Corn Ground.*

One-half of this was fall ploughed, the balance Timothy sod, broke May 1st, 1852, 7 inches deep. Cost of tending about the same as fall ploughing.

	Dr.
To 28½ acres ploughing, at \$1 per acre,.....	\$28 50
To 5 days' harrowing, at \$2,.....	10 00
To 4 bushels seed corn, 75 c.,.....	3 00
To 9½ days' planting, 7s.,.....	8 31
To 26 days' cultivating corn, \$1 25,.....	30 50
To 12 days' hoeing, 88 c.,.....	10 56
To 57 days' husking, \$1,.....	57 00
Shelling and marketing 1,710 bushels, at 4 c.,.....	68 40
Total cost,.....	\$216 27

	Cr.
By 28½ acres, 60 bushels per acre, 1,710 bushels, at 50 c.,.....	\$855 00
Cost,.....	216 27
Nett profits.....	\$638 73
Cost per acre,.....	\$7 59
Nett profits per acre, .....	22 41

*One Acre Potatoes.*

1853.	Dr.
To cost of raising,.....	10 00
	Cr.
By 150 bushels potatoes, 25 c.,.....	\$37 50
Nett profits,.....	\$27 50

*One Hundred and Three Sheep.*

	Dr.
To cutting and stacking 25 tons hay, at \$1,.....	\$25 00
To feeding 30 bushels corn, 50 c.,.....	15 00
To feeding and salt,.....	10 00
To washing and shearing sheep, and marketing wool,.....	10 00
Total cost,.....	\$60 00

	Cr.
By 103 fleeces, average 3 lbs. 10 oz., 373 lbs., at 46 c.,.....	\$171 58
By 53 lambs, \$1 25,.....	66 25
	\$237 83
Cost,.....	60 00
Nett profits,.....	\$177 83



*Fifteen Head of Cattle and One Colt.*

	DR.
To cost keeping to hay,.....	\$24 00
To 25 bushels corn feed, 50 c.,.....	12 50
To labor and salt,.....	10 50
Total cost,.....	<u>\$47 00</u>
	CR.
By growth on cattle and colt,.....	\$150 00
Cost,.....	<u>47 00</u>
Nett profits,.....	\$103 00
Dr. To fattening one sow and four pigs, 80 bushels corn, at 50c.,....	40 00
Cr. By 1,500 lbs. of pork, at 5c. per lb.,.....	<u>75 00</u>
Nett profits,.....	<u>\$35 00</u>
25 bushels apples, \$1,.....	\$25 00
8 bushels peaches, \$1,.....	8 00
5 swarms bees, \$5,.....	25 00
50 lbs. honey, 12½ c.,.....	6 25
24 turkeys, 50 c.,.....	12 00
60 chickens, 12½ c.,.....	<u>7 50</u>
	\$83 75
Cost of keeping the above,.....	<u>10 00</u>
Nett profits,.....	<u>\$73 75</u>

*Twenty-one Acres Timothy Seed.*

Dr. To harvesting, threshing and cleaning,.....	\$45 00
Cr. By 84 bushels, at \$2 per bushel,.....	<u>168 00</u>
Nett profits,.....	\$123 00

*Recapitulation.*

	Cost of Growing.	Net Profits.
23 acres of wheat,.....	\$202 50	\$453 00
17½ acres wheat,.....	104 80	278 50
9½ acres spring wheat,.....	68 30	159 70
2½ acres rye,.....	14 75	10 25
5½ acres barley,.....	40 25	32 55
12 acres oats,.....	88 00	174 50
28½ acres corn,.....	216 27	638 73
1 acre potatoes,.....	10 00	27 50
103 sheep,.....	60 00	177 83
Cattle and colt,.....	47 00	103 00
Pork,.....	40 00	35 00
Apples, Peaches, Bees, Turkeys, &c.,.....	10 00	73 75
21 acres Timothy seed,.....	<u>45 00</u>	<u>123 00</u>
Total,.....	\$946 87	\$2,287 31

Number of acres, 240. Paying an interest on \$158 88 per acre, at 6 per ct.

WM. P. WEST, *Batavia, Ill.*

## Statistics of Towns on Illinois Central Rail-Road, 1855.

NAME.	When started.	Number of Inhabitants in 1850.	Number of Inhabitants in 1855.	Number of Houses in 1850.	Number of Houses in 1855.	Number of Churches.	Number of Schools and Academies.	Number of Stores.	Number of Hotels.	Number of Saw and Flour Mills.	Number of Factories.	Number of Physicians.
Thornton, .....	1853	none	120	none	21	..	..	3	1	..	..	3
Chebanse, .....	1854	"	25	"	5	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
Woosung, .....	1855	"	54	"	8	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Kappa, .....	1853	"	150	"	35	..	1	2	2	1	..	2
Ashley, .....	1854	"	150	"	60	2	1	8	2	1	3	2
Du Quoin, .....	1853	"	125	"	20	..	1	4	1	..	..	2
Loda, .....	1855	"	100	"	10	..	..	3	1	..	..	2
Mendota, .....	1853	"	1800	"	200	2	2	25	7	1	..	8
Sandoval, .....	1854	"	120	"	20	..	..	3	2	2	..	1
Centralia, .....	1854	"	600	"	60	..	..	11	3	..	..	3
Onarga, .....	1854	"	100	"	25	..	1	3	2	1	..	3
Council Hill, .....	1828	300	400	75	100	1	2	3	3	1	4	..
Hudson, .....	1836	25	103	6	21	1	1	1	..	..	..	2
Warren, .....	1850	25	350	4	125	2	2	10	2	..	3	3
Pana, .....	1855	none	250	none	32	..	..	6	2	..	1	2
Manteno, .....	1854	"	175	"	22	..	1	3	..	..	..	1
Apple River, .....	1854	"	140	"	30	..	1	6	1	..	..	..
Monroe, .....	1850	145	800	26	200	1	3	3	1	..	..	2
Richview, .....	1840	65	525	13	89	1	1	9	1	2	12	5
De Soto, .....	1854	none	500	none	70	..	1	4	1	3	..	1
Mattoon, .....	1855	"	150	"	40	..	1	9	2	..	..	1
Amboy, .....	1850	16	1329	3	300	2	1	30	3	1	8	4
Scales Mound, .....	1850	14	256	2	35	2	2	4	1	..	..	..
Tonica, .....	1850	3	180	1	38	1	1	2	1	..	1	1
Pesotum, .....	1854	none	16	none	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Eleroy, .....	1850	18	225	8	42	..	1	5	1	..	..	1
Freeport, .....	1838	1400	5000	200	1000	9	1	75	10	4	5	18
Panola, .....	1853	none	150	none	15	..	..	2	1	1	1	..
W. Urbana, .....	1854	"	416	not given	not given	2	1	10	2	1	..	1
Urbana, .....	1835	500	1145	"	"	2	2	22	4	2	3	6
La Salle, .....	1839	200	3500	25	800	4	8	60	4	..	5	10
Carbondale, .....	1853	none	350	none	90	2	1	6	2	2	5	2
Lena, .....	1853	5	350	1	65	1	1	5	1	1	16	1
Pulaski, .....	1854	none	100	none	12	..	1	1	1	2	..	..
Decatur, .....	1829	600	2200	175	600	6	4	30	4	4	19	11
Nora, .....	1852	none	300	none	60	1	1	7	2	..	5	2
Forreston, .....	1855	"	90	"	13	..	..	2	1	..	..	..
Bloomington, .....	1832	2200	5500	400	1540	10	17	26	8	7	8	21
Calumet, .....	1828	50	150	12	40	1	2	2	2	2	..	..
Vandalia, .....	1820	360	1000	60	125	4	1	9	4	2	1	4
Kankakee, .....	1853	none	2560	none	400	4	4	45	3	3	3	8
Ullin, .....	1854	"	110	"	10	..	..	..	2	2	..	..
Patoka, .....	1855	"	20	"	5	..	..	3	..	..	..	..

NAME.	When started.	Number of Inhabitants in 1850.	Number of Inhabitants in 1855.	Number of Houses in 1850.	Number of Houses in 1855.	Number of Churches.	Number of Schools and Academies.	Number of Stores.	Number of Hotels.	Number of Saw and Flour Mills.	Number of Factories.	Number of Physicians.
Wapella, .....	1853	none	275	none	35	..	..	5	1	..	..	1
Makanda, .....	1854	14	50	5	15	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Dunleith, .....	1853	5	700	1	175	1	2	6	1	1	1	2
Polo, .....	1854	none	550	none	130	1	1	18	2	..	..	3
Cairo, .....	1853	300	1300	15	150	2	1	25	3	1	..	3
Sublette, .....	1855	none	185	none	38	1	1	3	1	..	..	1
Tacusa, .....	1855	"	40	"	5	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Moawequa, .....	1853	"	300	"	40	1	1	7	2	1	2	2
Oconee, .....	1855	"	70	"	10	..	..	2	..	..	..	1
Macon, .....	1854	"	28	"	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Minonk, .....	1854	"	70	"	15	..	1	1	1	..	..	..
Richton, .....	1853	10	20	1	5	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Villa Ridge, .....	1854	none	50	none	10	..	..	..	..	2	..	..
Dixon, .....	1839	540	3200	..	..	6	3	43	6	2	3	7
Tamaron, .....	1854	none	48	none	10	..	..	3	1	..	..	..
Jonesboro, .....	1818	584	808	113	162	2	2	13	3	1	3	7
Clinton, .....	1845	800	1500	300	500	2	3	20	3	1	..	10

At some of these stations small settlements existed before the town was organized, which accounts for population appearing on the statement before the date given for the starting of the town.















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